STRANGE, FASCINATING, MYSTERIOUS, "THE WHITE PRINCESS," NEXT WEEK

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HONOR AMONG THIEVES; Or, A STRANGE ROMANCE.

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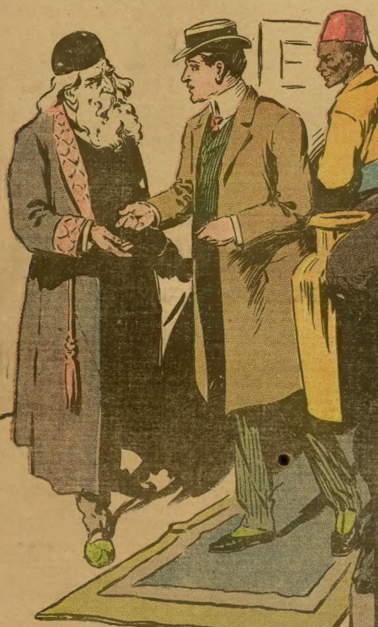

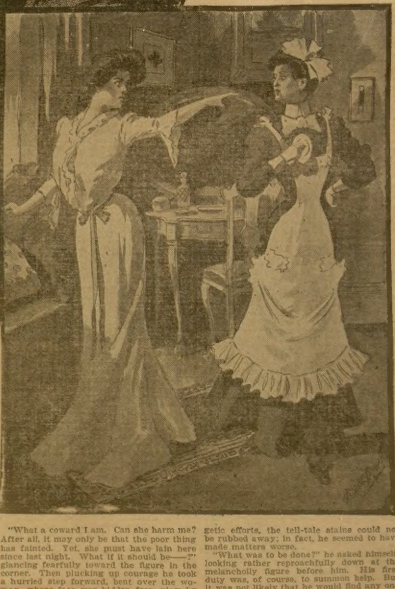

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CHAPTER I.

THE SILENT PASSENGER.

It was about five o'clock in the morning of a dull, December day, that Gilbert Denwood, the young artist who occupied a studio on the top floor of the Arcadian Flats, left his room intent on his usual morning walk.

He was making his way to the stairs when he was a little surprised to see the car of the elevator standing there. As eight o'clock was the usual hour that it began running, it struck him as a peculiar circumstance, particularly as he saw no signs of the young man who generally worked the machine.

As Renwood was in no particular hurry to take his constitutional, he approached the shaft and peered in through the bronze lattice-work. At first sight the car seemed empty, but as his eyes became accustomed to the light, or rather the lack of it, he made out a huddled figure in one corner with hands stretched out over the leather upholstered bench at the back.

In that uncertain light he could not tell from where he was standing whether it was a man or a woman that lay there in the depths of the car.

It would likely be the young man that ran the elevator, who was far from strong. He might have been stricken down at his post on the last trip the previous night.

Renwood tried the door leading to the car, and, though it looked tight shut, he succeeded in sliding it back. Then he stepped in and approached the huddled figure in the corner, rather timidly, for he was a mild natured young man, nervous, high- strung and easily upset.

It was, of course, his duty, since he was apparently the only person in the house awake, to do what he could for this unfortunate person who had collapsed. But he had no relish for the task. When he saw it was a woman, he paused, shivering and drew back, looking around him vacantly, listening.

The only sounds that reached him were the vehicles passing down in the street. The building itself, was perfectly silent.

"It would have been much better if I'd not been so confounded curious," he grumbled, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, wishing himself at the same time a hundred miles away.

But though he wanted to be anywhere but here, he made no effort to run away as he was free to do.

There were reasons why he should be interested in the silent passenger in the car. He wanted to satisfy himself regarding the identity of the unfortunate woman. At the same time he was afraid.

"What a coward I am. Can she harm me? After all, it may only be that the poor thing has fainted. Yet, she must have lain here since last night. What if it should be——?" glancing fearfully toward the figure in the corner. Then plucking up courage he took a hurried step forward, bent over the woman, whose face was hidden from view by her outstretched arms.

He straightened himself up again with a gasp, shaking his head doubtfully.

"That dress, I should remember that since I paid for it," he muttered.

He took a box of matches from out of his pocket, and, having lit one, bent over the woman again. He laid his hand gently on her arm and raised it to get a view of her face, when she slipped away from him and lay outstretched on the floor.

This movement was so sudden and unexpected, that the young man uttered a cry of alarm, and it was some moments before he could nerve himself to look at the woman's face, that gleamed whitely in that semi-darkness.

"Good God, the poor thing has been murdered," he exclaimed, after completeing his inspection. "But why here, of all places?" and he looked around him again, timidly, even fearfully. She had been stabbed in the throat, a deep vicious blow, and the lace about her neck was stained with red.

Renwood eyed her at his feet, uneasily, and shook his head.

"A nasty business this, and right before my door, too, and she was here to see me at a late hour last night. How—how am I to explain?"

Then feeling a strange moisture on his hands, he shuddered when he looked down and saw that they were stained with blood.

"If any one were to happen on me now," with a grimmace as he rubbed his hands furiously with his handkerchief "I should find myself in a hole and no mistake."

It seemed to him that despite his energetic efforts, the tell-tale stains could not be rubbed away; in fact, he seemed to have made matters worse.

"What was to be done?" he asked himself, looking rather reproachfully down at the melancholly figure before him. His first duty was, of course, to summon help. But it was not likely that he would find any one

(Continued on page three.)

WHAT COMES AFTER.

You may dance if you will,
  And you will if you must.
There is time you must kill—
  But I hope and I trust
While you're jigging away
  You can put up the stuff.
There's the fiddler to pay;
Have you money enough?

It's a tune that appeals
  Very much to the ear,
And it tickles your heels
  And it fills you with cheer.
You are happy and gay,
  You have never a care,
But the fiddler's to pay;
  Have you money to spare?

Though the fee may seem big
  For the pleasure you get,
All the same you must dig
  Up and pay it, you bet.
There's a settlement day
  When accounts must be cast
And the fiddler's to pay.
  You must pay him at last.

THE ROYAL LUNATIC.

By LAWRENCE LESLIE.

In the old cathedral at Westers, in Sweden, is an unpretending stone, covering what was once the tomb of Sweden's most unfortunate monarch. Upon the plain granite are deeply cut the words: "Eric XIV., died 26th February, 1577;" and below this, in Latin, is the following quotation from the second chapter of the first Book of Kings: "The kingdom is turned about, and has become my brother's, for it was his from the Lord."

The unfortunate monarch, whose death and burial is thus unpretendingly commemorated, was the eldest son of the renowned Gustavus Vasa, and heir to the wealth, honor, and glory which his illustrious sire had garnered by a long life of struggles, toils, and triumphs. Eric, however, demonstrated at an early age his unworthiness of the glorious heritage to which he was born. He was a wild, wayward youth, and the irregularities of his early life embittered the closing years of the great Gustavus' reign. In the royal museum at Stockholm is yet preserved a letter from that monarch, written near the close of his life, which shows how sorely his virtuous heart was grieved by the unworthy conduct of his son and heir.

"Dear Son Eric," he writes, "thou sendest us many writings, it is true, but with what gladness we read them, God truly knoweth. For His Son's death and sufferings, and for the filial love pious children should render their parents, dear Eric, desist from these torments wherewith thou vexest and wringest the heart of thine aged and sorrowing father."

Eric, however, emerged into manhood without perceptibly correcting the faults which had sent his father sorrowing to the grave, or developing but few of the virtues which distinguished his parent. Hoping to improve him by cultivation, and render him a worthy inheritor of his fame, Gustavus had favored him with every advantage of culture and education. His social and scholarly accomplishments were therefore extensive, while a half-dozen volumes, several of them in Latin, attest his industry as an author.

Eric had two half-brothers, John and Charles, sons of Gustavus by a second marriage, and they had hardly emerged from babyhood before rivalries and jealousies had arisen which led to unceasing contention and turmoil. With the design of removing these rivalries and soothing the jealousies of the younger brothers, rendering them less likely to de discontented when Eric should assume royal honors, the considerate father determined to give them position and wealth but little inferior to that of their sovereign brother, believing that they would thus feel less keenly his superiority, and, being only nominally subjects, would cease to be discontented and dangerous. It was a fatal mistake, and the means designed for pacification became the instruments of vengeance.

On the twenty-ninth of September, 1560, Gustavus breathed his last, and Eric was soon after crowned at Stockholm. The ceremony was of almost barbaric splendor, and his entrance into the capital eclipsed in showy grandeur anything the simple-minded Swedes had ever seen before.

An Oriental pageant for the first time unfolded its glories under the cold skies of the North. Heralds and pages, knights and squires, half-mailed soldiers on foot, heavier-clad warriors on horseback, troops in fancy uniform, the old aristocracy and the new nobility vying with each other in the dashing brilliance of their attire, and, beside, the whole population of the city clothed in holiday garb—all constituted a picture new to the nation, but not the less pleasing on account of its novelty.

Eric's reception was enthusiastic; and, as he was proudly riding along the brilliant ranks, his well-trained steed gave a sudden start, made a quick plunge forward, and then stumbled, nearly throwing its royal rider.

Eric muttered a curse, and expressed his surprise to Count Sture that so well-trained an animal should prove so unsteady.

"Sire," replied the count, "on this square of Brunkeberg the noblest heads in Sweden have fallen beneath the ax, and perhaps the horse smells blood!"

At this remark the new king scowled. The color left his face, and his whole frame shook as with an ague. The homage of the nobility was unheeded, the shouts of the friendly populace elicited no recognition, and the swell of martial music failed to restore his composure. Etiquette was set at defiance, the order of exercises was neglected or forgotten and pressing the spurs to the flanks of his steed, he put an end to all ceremonies, and with an air of mingled fury and fright, dashed away from his attendants, broke through the gay ranks which encircled him, flung back the crowds which thronged the square, and fled to his private apartments in the palace.

The citizens stood mute with astonishment; but the two brothers, John and Charles, who had already prophesied evil of Eric, looked at each other and smiled, for they felt that he was already a monarch without a scepter.

From that hour his conduct was little better than that of a madman, and many of his acts were without decency, dignity, or judgment. He was seized with a passion for matrimony, and wooed four ladies at one time.

Elizabeth of England was then in the full blaze of her fame, and he wrote numerous letters to London and sent several embassies to solicit her hand.

Impatient at the unsatisfactory progress made, he twice attempted the voyage to London, to throw himself at the feet of the virgin queen. Storms, however, flung him back upon the coast, and then he appealed to the King of Denmark to allow him to shorten the water passage by passing through the Danish territory, but was refused.

While his negotiations with Elizabeth were going forward, he offered himself to the unfortunate Mary Stuart, to the Princess Renee of Lorraine, and to the Princess Catharine of Hesse.

The father of the last named gave his consent, and was arranging the details of his daughter's dowry when the King of Denmark placed in his hands an intercepted letter from Eric to Elizabeth, in which he assured her that, nothwithstanding his courtesy to other ladies, his heart was wholly in her keeping, and he hoped her hand would soon be his.

The false lover, being thus exposed, the Prince of Hesse indignantly broke off the match.

All his other matrimonial schemes failed, and the superstitious man consulted an astrologer to learn the cause of his failures. This impostor assured him that the cause of his troubles was the treachery of a man with fair hair, who was near the king's person.

Eric believed his brother John to be the person described, and he was at once thrown into prison.

But his imprisonment brought no sunshine to the madman's life. He every day became more gloomy, morose, and maniacal. He looked upon all men with suspicion, and interpreted the most natural and most insignificant of gestures as some dreadful telegraphing of hideous treason. His violence was frantic, but was usually followed by equally frantic paroxysms of repentance. After a day of frightful outrage he would retire to his closet and groan, and weep for hours over his sin, and then suddenly growing furious, and gnashing his teeth, he would rush forth and commit fresh excesses.

He seldom appeared in public, and never without dread of some impending calamity. On one occasion when he was riding in the streets of Stockholm, he saw a large crowd blocking the way in front. He trembled in every limb, and declared to his attendants that a revolt had broken out, and he turned his horse to fly. He returned, however, on learning that the crowd was peaceful, and had gathered round a poor flower-girl named Catharine Mone, who had been knocked down by some careless rider. The king approached, looked down upon the helpless and unconscious girl, and was at once struck with pity and admiration. She was on the point of being carried into a neighboring house when she languidly opened her eyes. Even their weak, trembling glance reached the king's heart, and, ordering her to be taken to the palace, he followed, smiling and apparently happy.

For days he watched over the slowly recovering girl, became calm, thoughtful, and considerate—in fact, he seemed like a new man. The King of Sweden was in love with the poor, innocent flower-girl, lowly born and humbly bred, who knew nothing but her Scripture history, and was as pure as the flowers she sold; but, unfortunately, she already loved a young sergeant, and did not incline her ear to the soft words uttered by her royal suitor. An agent was sent to the young sergeant, and a liberal sum of money and a commission induced him to break his engagement with Catharine, and ever after refuse to see her.

In the meantime Eric consulted his astrologer, and was informed that the stars were favorable to the union, and determined to make her his wife.

When Catharine had nearly recovered, a letter from her lover, announcing his desertion, was placed in her hands.

The shock was so severe that she suffered a relapse, and delirium ensued.

Eric carefully watched over her, wept at her distress; and his affection increased by this evidence of her constancy.

When restored to health she would have left the palace, but was informed that she had been appointed one of the maids of honor to the king's sister, and that the office rendered her presence in the palace necessary. She replied only by entreaties and tears.

In vain she was told of the high honor of the appointment, and assured that her family would be raised far above want.

It was only when the king came in person and pleaded his cause that she yielded a reluctant consent.

She rapidly acquired fresh graces, learned with ease all that accomplished masters could teach, behaved with modesty and reserve, soon won the respect and love of the royal family, and at last accepted the king as a suitor. Her influence over him soon became very great; a word or a look from her could calm him instantly, even in his most violent moods, and her little hand laid gently upon his shoulder more than once arrested his arm when raised to offer violence to those around him.

One day, however, a year or so after their betrothal, he discovered in the palace the young sergeant, the former lover of Catharine, who, violating his many promises, was evidently waiting for an interview with his former sweetheart. He was immediately sent to the executioner, and the maddened king again rushed into the most frantic excesses.

He murdered the head of the noble family of Sture with his own hand, and killed in the presence of the entire court, Burreas, his most intimate companion; he sent innocent men to the scaffold by scores, and then, in his moments of remorse, he would wander about the fields, likening himself to Nero, and heaping maledictions upon his own head.

During these seasons of remorse, what poor reparation he could make to those families whose members had been judicially or otherwise murdered, through his blind fury, was freely tendered.

The excitement of a war with Denmark increased his malady, and the dangerous illness of Catharine aggravated the distemper. She had in the meantime borne him two children—a son and a daughter, and when she recovered Eric resolved to attest his thankfulness by publicly acknowledging her as his wife, and crowning her as his queen.

Accordingly the ceremony was performed with unrivaled splendor, and a vast concourse of the nobility graced the coronation banquet. Eric's two brothers, however, were violently opposed to the formal and legal marriage, as it would legitimate the former fruits of the union, and place an additional obstacle between them and the coveted throne. They therefore openly denounced the measure, and spread discontent among the people, who looked on at the ceremonies with menacing silence; and when the minister of state, who, standing behind Catharine, essayed to place the royal diadem upon her brow, and in the effort let it fall from his hands to the floor, the inference was quickly drawn that the momentary splendor was to be followed by destructive storms.

So it proved. Eric's brothers, Dukes John and Charles, raised the standard of the revolt, and the thousands who had injuries in the past to avenge, and something in the future to dread, gathered around the rebellious banner. The king was abandoned by his most trusted friends; the army deserted by whole regiments; fortress after fortress fell, and the daily increasing multitude of foes advanced to the very walls of the capital. Resistance was hopeless, and in his despair he rushed to his physician, extending his bare arm, and begged that astonished official to open his veins. The doctor shed tears at his king's distress, and declared that it was his duty to prolong, not to abridge life of his sovereign. Touched by this exhibition of fidelity, amid so much treachery, the king embraced the faithful officer, and with fresh courage he resolved to defend his queen and his throne.

His last struggle was the most worthy epoch of his reign; but his heroism was in vain. All Sweden seemed in arms against him, his mother and his sisters, betrayed him, and at length no one stood by his side but Catharine and a few knights, who would not violate their oaths of fidelity by desertion.

In this extremity his brothers offered terms of capitulation, and Eric surrendered on a promise of safety for himself and adherents, a handsome revenue for life, and the sovereignty of a province. But once in the hands of his brothers, all these conditions were violated, and the next morning the fallen monarch was hurried to the prison which was henceforth to be the mute witness of his sufferings.

His faithful wife attempted to follow, but was roughly driven back. The prisoner saw her as he passed, and called out:

"Farewell, Catharine! Farewell! Teach my son to remember that his father was a king!"

Alas! that very memory proved that son's ruin.

Eric was thrown into a dungeon, and for keepers there were placed over him men whom he had previously wronged, and who now sought to be revenged. He was tortured, insulted, maltreated, and shackled, and in the museum of Abo is now shown one of the chains with which the unhappy man was loade[illegible] He was fond of books, music, and drawing, but these were refused him; and his request to be permitted to sit a portion of the day in the sunshine, even though chained to the earth, was contemptuously denied.

So flagrant were his wrongs that the very people who had rebelled against him were touched with compassion, and solicited the new king to cause some mitigation of the severity.

John, however, punished this interference as rebellion, and Eric's miseries were increased. He was carried from prison to prison, and his condition became worse with every removal.

Catharine was offered rich estates and a pension, but she refused to accept anything from her husband's persecutors. She retired to a little dwelling near the prison where Eric was confined, and, with her son in her arms, she appeared daily before his cell, pleading piteously to see him, but was as frequently driven away by the guards.

Occasionally a sentinel, more compassionate than his fellows, would affect not to see her, and, creeping to the barred window, she would exchange a few words with her husband, and allow him to look upon his idolized child. She spent all her time between the prison of the father and the cradle of the son—the comforter of one and the guardian and nurse of the other.

In order to deprive the unhappy prisoner of the pleasure derived from these interviews his enemies determined to remove him from Stockholm, and strict orders were given that neither Catharine nor the child should be allowed to follow him.

For nearly two years they never met nor heard a single word from each other. At length, however, after many brutal refusals, she was allowed a five minutes' interview, and finally given permission to occupy a room in the castle where Eric was confined, but prohibited from speaking with him. But day after day Catharine took a position in the yard in sight of her husband's cell window, where, with her child, she would sit all day exchanging signs of greeting and sympathy with the unhappy husband and father. To increase his torment his jailers used frequently to tear him away from the window when his wife first appeared and chain him in the farther corner of the room, where he could not see the dear ones who were so near to him. But on such occasions the faithful watchers remained throughout the day, while the captive king would sing some plaintive, touching melody which they had learned together, in happier days.

The pretended discovery of a plot for Eric's rescue was made the occasion for fresh severities. He was forced into one of the lowest dungeons, heavier manacles were placed upon his already galled limbs, and the light of day shut off forever. The furniture of his gloomy abode consisted of a rickety table, a stool, a low wooden bench which served for a bed, and an iron basin, in which his food was served. He was deprived of his books, music, and even a light was refused him.

It was while thus secure and helpless that his brother procured the passage of a law by the Swedish Parliament condemning the unhappy man to death. The ever-vigilant wife was among the first to hear of the sentence, and she immediately left Stockholm secretly in a sledge, which she was soon compelled to abandon, and journeying many weary miles on foot, at last reached the prison. This terrible journey was made in February, when the violent storms of wind and snow were sweeping the country. Human habitations were few, beasts of prey prowled through the inhospitable forests which she was compelled to traverse, and yet, amid the darkness, dangers, and storms she struggled on with her almost dying child in her weary, half-frozen arms, and when within three miles of the town her strength failed and she sank senseless into the snow.

A belated peasant, who chanced to be passing, rescued her, and in his humble home she rested until morning, when she rose early and hastened to the town, hoping, yet she scarcely knew why, to avert the terrible fate threatening her husband.

But the executioner had traveled more swiftly than the faithful wife, and several hours before she arrived the fatal draft had been administered, and Eric was no more. She soon learned the truth, but half frantic with grief, and thoughtless of herself, she rushed to the door of his cell, where the corpse yet lay, shrieking in her agony, wound her arms around the bars, and struggled as though she would wrest them from their sockets, crying:

"Eric! Eric! for the love of Heaven, if you can hear me, answer!"

Her voice resounded through the cell, but the fixed, sunken eyes opened not—Eric never spoke again.

He was buried without ceremony in the tomb we have already described.

Many years after, the remains were removed by Gustavus Adolphus to the cathedral at Upsal, and a splendid monument erected, which still retains much of its original grandeur and beauty.

The sorrowing wife removed to Abo, where she mourned for more than forty years. Her daughter, who married a great statesman and soldier of Sweden, erected a fine monument to her memory.

The son was banished at an early age, wandered weary, heart-broken, and penniless from country to country, and finally found a grave in the wilderness of Russia.

Uncanny Yarns.

A minister of the gospel, according to this tale, was walking to and fro in a long passage that ran through the house, and meditating upon his next sermon. There brushed by him a housemaid. He watched her pass and enter his study. Fearing that she would disarrange his papers, he hurried after her, went into his study—and no one was there. No means of egress was possible but by the one door, through which he had seen the girl enter. He rang the bell and—the housemaid came down from the top of the house, where she had been performing her duties. And the unusual part of the story is that nothing happened—no one sickened and died. The young woman married happily. And yet that minister of the gospel is sure that he saw that housemaid pass him. Nor to this day does the stout and happy matron know that she was ever in two places at once.

Under the date of March 6, 1906, the Annual Register tells how a butcher of Stretford, in Lancashire, England, had disappeared during a recent flood, and how rumors spread that an apparition had been seen near a certain local pool of water. Some gave it the form of an uncanny dog, others that of an equally mysterious man who uttered blood-curdling yells, and it with told that, even when nothing was seen, cattle refused to drink at the pond, and horses trembled as they passed. At last a town meeting decided to pump the pool dry. It was done, and there, sure enough, was the butcher.

Says a recent news item in an English newspaper: "A Mrs. Howling of Penge dreamed that she saw her little girl washed up on Hastings beach and the body taken away on a tarpaulin. Two days later the child was knocked down by a pantechnicon and its wheels passed over her. Bystanders brought a tarpaulin, upon which the child was taken to the Beckenham cottage hospital."

Schoolboys' Blunders.

Here are a few mistakes made by English schoolboys in their examination papers:

Teacher's dictation: "His choler rose to such a height that passion well-nigh choked him."

"Political economy is the science which teaches us to get the greatest benefit with the least possible amount of honest labor."

"The sun never sets on British possessions because the sun sets in the west and our colonies are in the north and east."

"Blood consists of two sorts of corkscrews—red corkscrews and white corkscrews."

"A Job's comforter is a thing you give babies to soothe them."

"In the United States people are put to death by elocution."

Question—"Define the first person." Answer—"Adam."

Only a very lazy man is afraid to earn money because it is tainted.

Honor Among Thieves.

(Continued from page one.)

stirring in the building at such an hour of the morning. They were a lazy and luxurious lot, that household, with the exception of himself, and seldom rose until eight or nine. In the street he might find a policeman if he had luck, but what sort of a figure would he present, and the story he must tell would surely reap for him a harvest of troubles. But it was cruel to leave the woman there, as long as there was a chance of a spark of life remaining.

"I thought all my troubles were over on her account," he grumbled, with something of a vindictive glance towards the figure on the floor. "But it appears that unless I'm mightily favored by fortune, they have just begun."

Still, though he had no reason to feel kindly towards the victim, he was a kind hearted, young man, and it was plainly his duty to go at once for assistance and see what the doctors could do for her. And what was to be done, must be done quickly if it was to be of any use.

Yet, still he hesitated, when he thought that it would come out that he had quarreled with this young woman the very night before, that high words had passed between them, which must have been heard by the people in the flats below him.

The rooms on the opposite side of his floor were vacant at the time, and he was glad of it. Had they been occupied, he might have had fresh witness against him, and even as it was——

He was a nervous, emotional, young man, and this strange business into which he had been suddenly pitchforked, racked him sorely. He knew that duty, humanity, urged him to procure help at once for this woman, and yet he lingered, unable to move, feeling like a man who is being pressed toward a yawning gulf without being able to resist or hold himself back.

It was while he was in this shivering state of hesitation that the sound of voices from below startled him. He heard steps on the marble stairs, men's voices, and they were coming up.

"Good God! I can't let them find me here, and with these," staring at his stained fingers. "This would be like getting caught red-handed, indeed. My cursed curiosity will cost me dear. I might have left it to others to discover the poor woman. What will these men think if they find me here? Oh, Lord!"

He thought he recognized the voice of one of the men ascending as that of the young fellow who ran the elevator. They were certainly talking about him, for he heard his own name mentioned more than once.

The best thing for him to do was to get back into his studio and remove these red stains from his hands. If there was any life left in the poor woman, these people could attend to her. He thought now that she was beyond hope.

But the door—the door was tight shut and he could not force it back. It must have slipped into place when he was moving about in the car, a mere touch sufficed to close it.

He had made himself a prisoner. Off there in the dim corner, the upturned face of the woman gleamed ghostily. Through carelessness he had trapped himself.

What on earth should he say to these men who were approaching? It would take a mighty inventive mind to explain the peculiar situation in which he found himself, and after he had quarreled with the very woman at his feet the night before.

Was ever a man in a more unfortunate predicament? He sat down at the extreme end of the car bench. What view would a certain lady who was very dear to him, take of this affair? What impression would it make on her feelings towards him. Would this white-faced woman, who lay there so silent in the twilight of the car, come between them and separate them as she had nearly succeeded in doing, when in life?

Renwood was startled at his point in his meditations by a hoarse cough, so near at hand that it brought him to his feet with a start. Then as he looked around him wildly, he saw a strange face pressed against the lattice-work of the shaft, and a pair of bright eyes regarding him intently.

CHAPTER II.

DOCTOR MORDECAI.

Who was this man? How long had he been watching there? Renwood could still hear the others talking one or more floors below, where they seemed to have paused.

This must be an independent investigator, but he was just as little welcome to the bewildered artist at that moment.

The door slid back on its well oiled groove, though how the trick was managed from the outside struck him as strange, even then when he had so many more important things to think about.

A venerable figure stood in the doorway. An old man with wavy, white hair, wearing a black velvet skull cap, and a very richly embrodiered dressing gown that descended to his feet, shod with yellow Turkish slippers.

He held a small night light in his hand, which hardly shone as much as the big diamond ring on his finger.

Renwood recognized the man now, though he could hardly call him an acquaintance. He was an eccentric personage known as Doctor Mordecai, the subject of much gossip about the building, perhaps because so little could be learned about him.

A man of whom many strange stories were told according to the inventive ability of the historian, a man who lived like an oriental, except he maintained only one servant, a haughty, brown man, either an Egyptian or Indian, who seldom spoke, and furnished quite as much material for gossip as his master.

"What's this? What's this? What's this?" wheezed out the Doctor, in a husky voice, at the same time waving his lamp before the face of the young man, who had nothing to say.

"Ah," as his glance fell on the figure outstretched on the floor.

"So! Well!" stooping down and laying his hand on the woman's breast.

He shifted his lamp to his other hand, and Renwood saw the diamond flashing here and there like a thing of life, while the old man pursued his investigation.

"Well?" he asked turning his sharp eyes on Renwood. "Well?"

"Is she dead?"

Doctor Mordecai gave a faint crackling laugh.

"Dead as she will ever be, young man. And you——" flashing his glow-worm lamp suddenly in the other's face.

It was done so suddenly that Renwood raised his hands as if to guard himself.

"I see! I see!" nodded the queer, old man, as he caught sight of those tell-tale stains, "Ah, this is bad business—very," shaking his head.

"The woman is dead, and you are here locked in with her. And——"

"Not so loud! Not so loud," implored the artist, touching his sleeve nervously. "Don't you hear those voices down below. Some men are there. You can hear their voices if you listen."

"Doctor Mordecai paused, and cocked his ear and listened.

"To be sure. To be sure, and from the excited way they are talking it must concern this business. Eh! what? they must not find you here?"

"No, no, they must not," whispered Renwood, eagerly, "though there is no reason why should I be afraid when I am innocent of any wrong towards her," with a shuddering glance towards the figure on the floor.

"Humph! That is as maybe," grumbled the Doctor, stroking his white beard. "You were certainly quarreling with some woman in your rooms last night. I heard you. And here I find you."

"I know. I know. Everything seems to look black for me, but I assure you I am innocent," protested the other, in a voice of feverish anxiety.

"Pooh, be calm! Be calm!" said Mordecai. "I care not if you are innocent or guilty. For all I know the poor jade that lies there may well have deserved her fate. That is a question that is a matter of indifference to me, but I would gladly save you from disaster. You once did me a kindness I haven't forgot. I don't want a worthy young man to be suddenly cut off in his prime through a blunder of justice. Come, come," taking Renwood by the sleeve. "We will talk this business over in my room, below. These fellows might prove impertinently curious. As for the woman, no harm can come to her. She is beyond earthly cares and perhaps better off than any of us. Come, and cautiously, for those fellows must not hear us, or see us, or all the fat would be in the fire."

Renwood was only too glad to find at that juncture, even such a strange friend in need. He could not remember that he had ever done the queer doctor a service, unless it was the time a week or so back, when he had discovered the old fellow in a half fainting condition on the steps and had assisted him to his room.

He knew how jealuosly he and his servant had guarded their domicile, and remembering the vague rumors he had heard about the doctor's home, he felt somewhat of a thrill, when, after Mordecai's knock, the door swung silently open, and they crossed the threshold.

It had scarcely closed behind them, when the doctor laid a long finger on his lips and nodded towards the hall. The men, whoever they were, had reached that floor. They were chattering excitedly.

"Spooks don't run off with elevators, no, never," said one man. "There's some black business in this as we'll find out only too soon. An' it was the painter feller that ye took up jest before midnight, huh? Jest before ye shut down? Well [illegible] never would trust such fellers. Makin' a livin' paintin' naked wimmin' and the like ain't no honest ockerpation for a man, I say."

The response was too indistinct for either Renwood or his companion to catch the meaning, and then the men walked away and began to mount the stairs to the top floor where the elevator stood with its silent passenger.

"Did you recognize that speaker?" asked the doctor, touching Renwood on the arm.

The young man started.

"No; that is, yes," he stammered. "I think it was the policeman who walks this beat, but I am not sure."

Mordecai turned around and called out something in a strange tongue. Whereupon a shadowy figure that had been standing in a corner of the wall, and which Renwood, occupied with other thoughts, had not noticed, vanished suddenly from the scene.

"Come with me," said the doctor, leading him forward and pushing aside a curtain, heavily embrodiered, and touched here and there with bits of metal and looking glass.

Renwood found himself in a long room that resembled an Oriental bazar more than anything else he had ever seen. The floor was covered deeply with rugs, there were divans along the walls, hanging lamps of silver and copper and brass. He was too much excited to absorb the details of this lavish interior, but he noticed that everything was of a superlative richness.

"Come, let us talk. Sit down," said the old man, bluntly, nodding toward a divan, and seating himself near by. "You look pale. Here," and he poured out some wine from a decanter standing on a tabouret and handed it to his visitor.

"Ah, you look better already," as Renwood drained it thirstily and his pale face took on a healthier hue. "Now, then, let us have the facts in this case, and how it comes that I find you shut in with a dead—a murdered woman, I should say. Tell me the truth if you want me to help you. Let me inform you that I shall know if you are lying."

Renwood's face betrayed a deeper crimson at these words, but he did not say anything. This man evidently meant him well, and though the sharp eyes that seemed to be searching the very depths of his heart looked fierce, there was a half-mocking cynical smile on the doctor's lips.

"Was that the young woman you were quarreling with last night?"

"Ye-s," replied the other, faintly.

"I thought so," rubbing his long nose thoughtfully. "Who was she?"

"A Spanish model. Marie Angostini by name."

"The trouble?" with the directness of a cross examiner.

"Oh, she fancied herself in love with me, and insisted that I had encouraged her. Nonsense, of course——"

"Of course," nodded the old man, drily. "And yet she looked to be a very handsome woman."

"She was mad to think that I showed her anything but courtesy. But you are a traveled man, I take it, and you know what these Spanish women are. For some time I have been wanting to get rid of her."

"Any other woman in the case?" asked the old man with a wrinkle at the corners of his mouth.

Again it was the artist whose face reddened while the doctor watched him with imperturable interest.

"Well, I am engaged to be married," he faltered, wondering why he was so confidential with this friend of the moment. And yet he needed a friend just then and even this queer being might to of service.

"Ah, then you had a good reason for wishing her out of the way!" and the doctor looked at the ceiling and stroked his beard a moment, thoughtfully.

"Of course I wanted to get rid of her," returned Renwood with some vehemence, "but, God knows, not in this way. You know what women are, and when this lady I intend to marry saw her there on more than one occasion——"

"Yes, yes, I understand all that. I can fill in the rest to suit myself. Now if you are innocent——"

"Why, have you any doubts of that?" surprised and not a little indignant. "You acted as if you intended to help me out of this mess, and yet if you believed me guilty you would hardly offer your services."

"Oh, yes, I would. Why should I sit in judgment on the rights and wrongs of this case. The girl is dead, that is sure enough. For all I know she may have deserved her fate. We won't talk of that. Why I myself when I was a younger man—I—but there, what is the use of delving in the graveyards of the past. I have a friendly feeling towards you, ever since that day which you have forgotten. Guilty or not, I'm going to help you. You'll need it as you never needed it before. Even from what you have told me, there is a damning lot of circumstantial evidence against you, and they might find more if they wanted to. The blundering police would do the rest. Leave it to them to hang you. And you are too young yet to go the way of sinful flesh."

The strange doctor leaned his face on his hand and relapsed into deep thought.

Renwood eyed him curiously. He half believed that Mordecai thought him guilty of the unfortunate woman's death, and yet the doctor had offered to help him? Well, he needed a friend at that moment, and though he came in such a questionable shape it was not a time to be too particular.

"Now then, if you will trust yourself to my guidance you'll keep out of a sea of troubles," said the doctor, raising his head. "That is if nothing goes wrong. Will you do as I tell you?"

"Can I help myself?"

"Well, no, not at the present moment," with a grim smile, "I'm an odd fish, but you'll get used to me. Eh! what now?" swinging round in his seat and facing a tall, lean Oriental-looking man, whose approach, even the artist had not noticed.

The servant, for such he must be, wore an ill-fitting suit of clothes of a screaming pattern, such as would be found only on a vaudeville comedian, and his impassive, brown face was crowned by a red, Turkish fez. He paid no attention to the visitor, but said a few words to his master in a low voice and in a strange tongue.

"They are here," said the doctor, turning to the artist.

"Here? Who is here?" rising to his feet.

"Oh, a policeman and others," carelessly, "but don't get excited. They want to examine the apartments to see if the man who did that woman to death is hidden here."

"But I—what's to be done?" stammered Renwood, glaring around him nervously.

"Keep still, that's all. And now follow me."

So saying, he half dragged the young man towards a distant part of the room.

Here stood a strange object. It was a black bear fully seven feet high holding a brass urn in its paws and seemed so lifelike that Renwood, in his nervous condition of mind, recoiled at the sight of those grinning jaws and fierce teeth.

"This creature has served me once before, and may serve it's purpose again," said the queer doctor. "Imagine yourself Red Riding Hood's grandmother, and for a brief time neither breathe nor think," as he led the young man to the rear of the animal and threw open a sort of door cunningly concealed under the animal's fur.

"In, in, man, it will only be for a short time," at the same time thrusting Renwood through the opening and then closing the aperture.

Dazed and bewildered, and yet grateful for the refuge well calculated to deceive the men that were looking for him, the artist followed as best he could the injunctions of the strange doctor.

"And to what am I indebted for the honor of this visit?" he heard the doctor say, suavely, as he opened the door on the hall.

"Murder, doctor! A poor young woman it is, an' but a few steps from yer own door. Lord save us!" replied a voice, and then the flat seemed invaded by a number of men, all chattering excitedly and at once.

CHAPTER III.

THE WOMAN IN THE CASE.

About this same hour that strange things were happening in the Arcadian Flats, a young woman was pacing nervously up and down the floor of a blue and white room in another part of the city.

She had evidently risen in haste, for the pale silk wrapper she wore was carelessly hooked, her feet bare, and her long, brown hair fell loose and unrestrained over the snowy shoulders.

The glance she caught of herself as she walked up and down, reflected in the mirror over the mantlepiece, seemed to startle her as if she were looking at a strange face.

"What havoc a few hours can make in one," she muttered. "I look ten years older than I did last night," and the blue eyes with dark hollows below them, turned here and there about the daintily furnished room with a troubled, restless look.

"Oh, I wonder what is happening off there, in that building?" she whispered, as she pulled aside the curtain at one of the windows and cast a furtive look over the roofs, still shrouded in morning mist, at some dim point beyond.

"I wonder what he is doing?" clasping and unclasping her hands nervously.

A timid knock startled her and she moved away from the window.

"Come in," she called out.

The door at the far end of the room was opened just far enough to admit a face crowned by a white cap, trimmed with purple ribbons.

"I thought I heard you moving about and so I took the liberty——"

"Never mind explaining, but come in if you mean to," replied the mistress, impatiently, at the same time studying the face of the newcomer with intense interest.

The maid, an elderly person, who still clung to her youth, as shown by her mincing gait, bleached hair and rather startling complexion, insinuated herself through the opening she had made for herself and advanced timidly and softly with something of the air of a conspirator.

"It's all right, mum," she said, in a mysterious whisper, at the same time looking around her cautiously. "I slep' out in that closet yonder on a sofy," nodding towards the door through which she had entered. "I thought it best for me to watch over ye ternight, to keep even the old gentleman, yer father, away."

"Well, that was very foolish of you. There was no occasion for such nonsense," retorted the young lady.

"Ah, you think so," muttered the maid, rather insolently, as she drew her thin reddened lips together and cast a malicious look at her mistress.

"I certainly do think so. But why this strange air of mystery you are putting on this morning? You were not engaged to pose as a melodramatic actress. Just drop if for it don't become you," and the speaker turned and walked over to the window again, where she stood staring over the mist-wreathed roofs of the city.

"Hump!" grumbled the maid. "that's all the thanks I get, or ever do get, when I tries to do a lady a favor. Did ye want yer father to know at what hour ye kum in last night, soppin' wet, all done up an' nigh hysterical. Huh?"

"That is after all, no concern of yours, what I do or what time I come in," replied the young woman, haughtily, as she turned away from the window and began to comb her hair before the mirror of a dressing table nearby.

"Sit down, and let me finish it," said the maid, taking the comb out of her hand and continuing the work. "Well, it's just as well ye didn't fall in with yer father or yer missus step-mother."

"Oh, I should only have had to acknowledge that I was out seeing my old nurse—"

"Until three o'clock in the morning? Faith, she must be a gay old lady to be keepin' such late hours," returned the servant with a tone of direct insolence.

"You need not do any more, I shall dress myself," said the young lady, turning around in her chair and snatching the comb out of the others hand. "What has come over you? Why do you talk to me in this manner? You forget your position, Mary. I have indulged you too much," and she began to comb her long, glossy hair with a shaking hand.

"Faith, ye have a feeble memory, ma'am, or ye wouldn't say what ye do after me lookin' after ye. Faith, ye was in such a state when ye come home, so excited, broken down, and generally done up, that ye needed help more'n a child to put ye to bed. Surely they must have been holdin' a wake at the hurses——"

The tone was so insolent that the young woman let the comb fall and faced the woman indignantly.

"I don't know what has got into you this morning," she said. "Have you been drinking or what——?"

"Me, ma'am?" fiercely. "Oh, what we poor gerls has to put up with, and me pertectin' ye when ye were in trouble an' all the thanks I get. I know what yer goin' to say—that ye discharge me. That fer the job," snapping her fingers derisively. "But I ain't goin' till I find it to me interests, and you'll find it to yours to keep me till that same time. So!" and she stamped her foot decisively, after this flood of eloquence had left her gasping and eyeing her young mistress, defiantly.

"I wish you would tell me what you mean—what you want? I don't follow you," said the lady, in a mild voice as she watched the maid with some uneasiness.

"Ah, you don't look so haughty an' we can get along better together," said the servant, with easy familiarity. "We might as well be frank with each other, first as last. Ye never went to visit the nurse last night. Never mind how I found out. It might be that when twelve o'clock come I thought somethin' had happened and went there to look for ye. Yes, and didn't find ye. There was only one other place ye would be likely to go to—but never mind. There was things doin' there at that place. Did ye know that there was blood on yer shoes, and the silk skirt?" her voice rising in shrill triumph.

The young womans eyes grew round with horror. She lurched forward and clasped the maids arm with a convulsive movement.

"Blood! Are you sure?" she whispered. "Oh, what have you done with the things?"

"Why, what it was me duty to do. Sure, when I had yer safe in bed I took them off with me and cleaned them. But what if

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LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER;

Or, THE SHADOWS OF DESPAIR.

By CONSTANCE BEATRICE WILLARD

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CHAPTER VII.

"LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER."

As long as she lived Vivian Fayetteville would never forget that terrible journey home, to her own dear England; for not only was she sick with apprehension and remorse, but she was not a good traveler, and being so utterly inexperienced, she felt her lonely condition acutely. At last, however, she reached her own beloved moors, and the last stage she made by carriage, for she did not want to return by way of the station nearest her old home.

Alighting at the gate which shut in the rather extensive grounds surrounding the cottage where her life had been spent, she walked slowly up it, wondering what she could say to explain her two months' absence.

As she hesitated, dragging her heavy luggage, the door opened and the woman she had always called aunt, rushed out, and throwing her arms about her, hugged her to her breast, crying excitedly:

"Thank heaven you have come back!"

Vivian, while relieved, was astonished. She had not expected any such reception, and she could only look her wonderment.

'Have been half crazy the past few days," the woman continued, and Vivian felt herself wondering if this woman could be any relation to her, for she seemed of a race apart.

"Have you been uneasy only the past few days?" she asked, gently.

The woman colored.

"To tell the truth I was awfully mad when I found you had gone, but I thought, 'Like mother, like daughter,' and said nothing, but now things are different."

Vivian turned a deadly pallor as she heard the pregnant words:

"Like mother, like daughter."

"I do not understand you in the least," she said, staggering as she spoke, for the poor girl was so weary.

"Come in," the woman said, not unkindly, "but we must hurry, for I expect my Lord and Lady within an hour. Gracious, but I have been worrying, and to think all this should happen!"

Vivian had dropped her bags, which the woman took up and easily carried into the cottage. Suddenly the girl noticed the difference in her manner. All of her old authoritive manner was gone, and she spoke and acted like a servant. Pausing on the sill, she asked quietly:

"Are you my aunt, as you have said?"

"No, your nurse."

Vivian sank wearily into a chair near the door and looked about the place, wondering how she could endure life here. She was reminded on every side of her sweet, sad love story, and her fearful betrayal. Her young heart was sadly torn and bleeding, and she felt that live to be a hundred, she could never again forgive or love the man who had brought such sorrow down upon her.

The woman had left the room, but came bustling back with a tea service and a plate of bread and butter.

"Quick," she said, "have your tea, and then I'll change your dress."

"What for?" Vivian asked, as she eagerly drank her tea, and devoured bread and butter, for it had been hours since she had broken her fast.

"I'll tell you in a minute. First I want you to swear something."

"What?"

"You have been away from here two months, I don't know where, or why, and I don't want to know. Keep your own secret. I'll just ask one thing, though, have you kept free, have you kept from marriage?"

A crimson flood dyed the girl's face, her neck and up to the roots of her hair:

"Yes," she said, slowly. Dear God, she had, but at what a price!

"Good. They'd never have forgiven that. No one had a claim on you, a legal claim?"

"No one," again the answer was spoken in abject shame, but the woman hastened on.

"All right then, we're safe. Now I want you to swear that you will never tell that you were absent these two months."

Vivian raised her eyes slowly, then said in an intense tone:

"I am not likely to want to tell anyone. If I take that oath, will you promise not to ask any questions, and never to tell I ever left you?"

"Indeed, I will, and I'll keep it, too."

"Then I swear that I will never tell," Vivian said, earnestly, and the woman returned:

"And I swear to never betray you or to ask any questions. Now if you are through, I'll hurry you into something else, for it won't do for you to be in a traveling dress, though what can you wear, you have grown so?"

"I have a white dress in one of my bags," the girl said, wearily.

"Then hurry. I've fixed your bath. Goodness, but you've grown pretty, but you look like a grown woman, instead of a child, and I don't think that will suit your mother."

Vivian paused:

"Am I to see my mother?" she asked, with a break in her voice.

"Yes, and your father, too, but do hurry."

"I'll hurry, it will not take me long, but just tell me why you said:

"'Like mother, like daughter.'"

"Because your mother ran away from home, too, but she married. Now hurry, and when I can come in, I'll fix your hair and tell you all about yourself. I'm to be Andrews, remember."

Vivian nodded, and made her way to her little room, the words ringing in her ears:

"Your mother ran away from home, too, but she married."

Then her native dignity asserted itself, and she said almost sternly:

"Whatever the past, please remember that we are to forget the past, each of us. If I keep my word, you must yours, even when we are alone."

There was a new ring in the girl's voice, a strange light in her lovely eyes. Vivian might feel herself soiled forever, but she did not intend to be reminded of it by a servant.

"All right, I'll hold my tongue, keep your secret, and I will say that I believe that you were more sinned against that sinning."

The stern young eyes warned her that she was treading upon forbidden ground, so she changed the subject, and began brushing the lovely hair of the girl, finally making a statement, which almost took away Vivian's breath.

CHAPTER VIII.

A LEAF FROM THE PAST.

"You are the only daughter of an Earl," was the astounding statement made by Andrews to the bewildered Vivian as she deftly wound the shining hair into becoming coils, admiring as she did so the wonderful beauty of her young mistress.

"And I have been reared here?" Vivian asked, slowly.

"Yes, almost in poverty, but it is not your father's fault. As I told you, your mother ran away. He was then Captain Gordon Carlton, and she Katherine Fayetteville. They were married in Scotland."

"Are you sure they were really married?" Vivian asked, turning her scarlet face aside.

"The marriage was alright, don't fear about that. My Lady is too smart to make any mistakes. She repented of her bargain, and would not allow her husband to make it public, even when she found you coming. You were born secretly, and she would never allow your father to see you or know where you were. There were several accidents, and Captain Gordon Carlton became Lord Gordon Gascoyne, Earl of Hampdon, Marquis of Kerchief, and Baron of Whitmore, and you are his only daughter, Lady Vivian Gascoyne."

What an irony of fate! She the lady Vivian, a poor, wronged, hapless girl, who if the truth were known would be cast into the streets with the brand of shame upon her lovely face!

"Why are you so hurrying?" she asked, in her sweet voice.

"Because, a week ago I received a letter from my Lady saying that she and her husband had acknowledged their marriage, and that today they were coming for you. I have been wild about you, sick with fear that you would not come back, and I would have to face them without you," and the woman shivered.

"Before that?"

"What, the arrival of the letter? Well, Lady Vivian, I thought as I said before, 'Like mother, like daughter,' and was not going to flash myself about the matter. I never supposed your folks would ever come for you, and I did not intend to tell them what would have taken away my income."

"You have been paid to take care of me? By whom?"

"Your father furnished the money. It came through your mother, and I have thought that at times she took part of it to pay her own debts, but that is neither here nor there now. We have come to the end of old things, and are beginning on new. If there were things in the past, I did not like, I will forget, and I would advise you to forget everything back of this minute, my Lady Vivian," and the woman smiled pleasantly, and a little deferentially.

The girl looked earnestly into the glass, and saw such beauty as seldom is seen, yet she knew it was not the face of a happy girl."

"The rooms are full of flowers," the nurse continued, "and you are to try and be happy and lively. I wish that this letter had come two months ago," and she sighed.

Vivian sprung to her feet:

"I would give all my life, Andrews, to be back those two months," she cried, passionately, then they both heard the noise of wheels and hastened down stairs.

Yes, if those past two months could have been blotted from her past, what a happy girl Vivian would have been as she followed Andrews.

All her short, young life she had longed for a mother's arms a father's kiss. Both were now to be hers, but between them lay the memory of other arms, other kisses, mad, sweet and dear, for which she was to feel such terrible longing that life, filled though it might be with luxury and chance, was to become a burden.

Two short months! Sixty days! Yet what a lifetime had been lived within that short period. Vivian was a true woman, who found her happiness in the love she bore the man the innocence of her heart taught her was her husband. Not until long afterwards did she realize how severe had been the wrench of leaving him, his tenderness, for he was very gentle and loving with her, and going away to loneliness and despair, and yet if she had known everything, she would have had strength to do right, for she was a good woman, and as soon as she knew, she acted accordingly.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEETING.

"Remember, not a word of the past two months," Andrews hissed in the girl's ear. "You are but a child, who has heard and knows nothing of the outside world," and then she went out to meet her employers, leaving Vivian to make her way into the flower-decked parlor, whispering to herself:

"Oh, if that were only true! If I were but an innocent, ignorant girl, instead of what I am. Dear Father in Heaven, help me, and bring down punishment upon the head of the man who has wrought this awful wrong!"

The prayer of this hapless young creature, so sweet, so innocent still, with the stain of the sinning one upon her fair brow, although blameless of wrong, by the voice of a woman, whom she knew was her mother, and she held her breath as she heard in a cool, even tone the words:

"Dear me, in the parlor waiting for us, you say, Andrews? Why did you not bring out the child? Not a child, but in long clothes, oh, mercy! Why I am not much more than a girl myself, and I cannot, no, dearest, I cannot have a grown daughter for years and years."

Then the waiting, trembling daughter heard a deep, manly voice, with a cadence of sorrow in it that brought tears to her ready eyes, say earnestly:

"We want our daughter. Take us to her immediately," and a second later, Vivian had sprung to her feet, a lovely rose flush dying her pale cheeks, a light coming into her glorious eyes, for her father impatient of delay, entered the room, and for the first time in his life, Vivian lay upon his breast, his arms about her. The poor, lonely girl who had never known parental love, was at last safely sheltered, but two months too late!

"My darling, my little one, my daughter," she heard the tender, deep voice whispering in her ear, broken with feeling, and she clung frantically to him, feeling as though at last she had found a safe haven. Somehow she knew that nothing would ever turn this father from her, not even a realization of the truth, and she began to regret her oath.

"And you will not let me see my child?" came in the high, well-bred, but cold tones of the Countess of Hampdon looked on, with a slight smile of amusement curling her beautiful lips.

Vivian hastily drew from her father's arms, and gazed wistfully at her mother, a charming brunette, for it was from her father, that Vivian obtained her rare blonde coloring. The lady was wonderously beautiful; there was not a silver thread in her abundant, glossy black hair; her eyes sparkled with youth; her red lips parted from perfect teeth, and her figure was as slender as when she had joined her forces with Captain Carlton, the penniless young officer. However, girl though she was, Vivian saw that there was no warmth of feeling beneath all that beauty; that if a heart beat beneath the exquisite Parisian gown, it throbbed but for one person, the Countess of Hampdon, and that her secret was better held safe by Andrews and herself.

As she gazed upon the tall, graceful girl, with rounded outlines, and lovely face, the titled lady gave a little scream of dismay, crying:

"Why, she's a grown woman! What have you done to make her grow like this? I cannot have such a big girl about me, for I am only thirty-three, myself, and I am sure I do not look my age."

Indeed she did not. Anywhere she might easily have passed for twenty-five, unless it was that she bore in her eyes an expression not often found in women of that age. It was a look of repression, of always being on her guard. To live for seventeen years, a secret wife, tells upon any woman, and it had in this way upon Katherine, Countess of Hampdon.

"I am very sorry, mother," Vivian began, when the lady gave another little scream, and put her dainty little hands, glittering with jewels over her shell-like ears, saying petulently:

"Mother! For the love of heaven do not call me that!"

"What would you have the child call you, Katherine? Sister? She is our child, and I much prefer the dignified mother and father, to any silly French words," Lord Gascoyne said with a coldness of manner, which warned his countess that she had reached a certain boundary line, beyond which she could not pass. For sixteen years he had patiently borne the burden her selfishness had laid upon him of being bound to a wife who was his in name only, who refused him the hiding place of his daughter, and who imposed upon him in every way, but now that he was titled and wealthy, he governed her, and she realized that he was master.

Quick to act, she turned suddenly and drew the tall girl into her arms saying sweetly:

"Forgive me, darling. It is hard to believe that you can be my daughter, and yet, Gordon I was her age when we were married."

"Yes," he said, slowly. The idea was a strange one to him. He was but thirty-eight, and he had a daughter old enough to marry. Still, that was nonsense. She should be carefully guarded, and not allowed to throw herself away.

"Still, she is but a little girl, in spite of her height and graceful manners. My darling daughter, I am exceedingly proud of you," and he smiled at her in a way that made the poor, tortured heart bleed afresh. Tears came into the exquisite eyes, and the young voice trembled as she said, falteringly:

"Oh, father, if I can only be all that you want."

"Bless the baby, how solomn she is!" the countess cried, with a light laugh, then added::

"And now to get off. We must go right back. Have you anything fit to travel in?"

"One dress, my lady," Andrews said in a very subservient way, such as Vivian had never heard her speak before.

"If it is in as good taste as this, it will be all right," was the quick reply, as the experienced eyes of the countess took in the elegant simplicity of the garment poor Vivian wore. Each thread of it seemed to burn the delicate flesh of the girl, for she remembered when and where it was purchased, and could even now hear a voice then so dear to her whisper:

"My lily, that gown is a dream, buy it so that I may see my darling robed like her own fair lilies," and she felt something come up in her throat and nearly choke her.

"Have you many garments like this?" the countess asked, drawing the girl and Andrews aside, but before Vivian could answer, the woman quickly said:

"No, my lady. She is very scantily supplied. I have not had the money to do much, but I bought her these dresses, resolved that she should have a couple of good things, rather than a lot of ill fitting gowns."

The Countess of Hampdon blushed, and looked anxiously about. She had used a particularly large check her husband had sent her, just before he had succeeded to his titles, telling her to see that their daughter was supplied with everything. It had come in the nick of time to pay some troublesome bills, and as Andrews shrewdly surmised, the countess was not likely to make any fuss about the paucity of her daughter's wardrobe.

"Very well. Throw together a few things. We go to London, direct, and then I can supply her with everything. Until then, she can use my things, for we are about the same size. My, but it seems strange!"

"I trust that your ladyship will be satisfied with my work. She is very young yet, but she is a good, sweet girl, and very bright," Andrews said, and Vivian felt a wild desire to hit the woman across her lying mouth, then she remembered that, through this very falsifying, she was protected, and she did not dare contradict. Her oath, and her realization of her mother's character prevented. She had no fear of her father, but she knew that if her mother knew the truth, she would cast her from their home, and set the mark of shame upon her, although she was her own daughter, and had but followed in the path the older woman had trodden seventeen years before. In the case of the mother, the man had been an honorable gentleman, in that of the daughter, the man had been a scoundrel, who took advantage of the child's total ignorance, to betray, where he should have shielded, and yet, who can say that this same man was not suffering?

Even as Vivian left the humble home which had sheltered her girlhood days, Leighton Flemish was madly searching, sending telegrams in every direction, but the one in which his fair, gentle victim had fled, and sobbing again and again:

"If I could only re-live these last two months! I have done many bad things, but nothing equal to this. God in Heaven, forget and be merciful! Give her back to me, and I will make every reparation, I will give up my useless life to re-instate my darling, who is as innocent of any wrong doing as an angel, for she knew nothing of wrong. Forgive and let all punishment rest upon me, for I alone am guilty!" This was the first prayer the man's lips had uttered for many a long year. Was it heard? If it was, would his plea be answered, or was his wrong doing too great? An answer to such a question, time alone can answer.

CHAPTER X.

"THE VOICE ITS POWER STILL RETAINS TO STIR HER ACHING HEART."

A shaded conservatory, with the music of falling waters mingling with the subdued chatter of many people; the green ferns and rare exotics together with the perfume from countless roses of every hue, white as a young girl's soul; pink like the dawn of love; yellow with a hint of jealousy in their sulphur colored petals, and red roses of every shade, from the happy colored American Beauty, which speaks of love reciprocated to the deep, blood red of the Jacquiminot, the rose of passion.

From the adjacent ballroom came sweet strains of ravishing music, and merry voices, and the spirti of mirth and rejoicing reigned. Yet, in the midst of all this, there was one whose lonely heart was still bleeding; whose heavy spirit could not rise to the lightness of those about her, and who, once her duties as daughter of this almost princely mansion were over, had stolen away to rest for a moment in the gratifying shade.

A girl with a beautifully sad face, one over which poets and painters raved, and yet no one could read the secret hidden in the young bosom, locked in the aching heart, concealed behind the eyes, blue as heaven, against which she felt she had so deeply sinned.

A year had passed since Vivian had learned that riches, a title and a wealth of fatherly love was hers, yet it is doubtful if she had known one moment's peace. She mourned her lost innocence as one who cannot be comforted, and if she had not possessed a very strong constitution, her health would have given away. Her mother utterterly failed to understand this strange

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daughter, but in her father's society, Vivian found contentment, and stole as many hours as she could from the exacting demands of society to sit with Lord Gascoyne, and listen to his words of wisdom, for the once captain, was a learned man, and one whose name was already known in the world of letters. Indeed, it had been through his literary efforts that he had earned the money he had been used to send his wife to take care of the daughter he had never seen.

Neither father or daughter ever mentioned the subject, but each knew that his confidence had been cruelly betrayed by one in whom trust had been placed, and that the money earned when others were sleeping, by the young father, had been spent upon the flighty wife's gay pleasures.

"How I love him," came from the lips, still those of a child in years, although curved with a woman's knowledge of grief and remorse. "Dear, dear father, the best in the world. Would he love me if he ever dreamed what a secret I carry?" she asked herself, and not for the first time, by any means, and the same answer came in reply:

"He would." She knew his noble nature by heart, and realized that he would not blame her, but the one who had neglected her for years, and prevented him from gaining possession of what he longed for with such intensity that his hair was prematurely silvered, and deep lines wrought upon his handsome face. From him had come Vivian's great beauty, and from him came her sweet disposition. It seemed that she inherited nothing from her mother, and for that the girl was glad.

As she sank down beneath a stately palm, hidden behind a great screen of ferns, Vivian looked almost too lovely for belief, in her imported gown of silver tissue, studded with tiny stars of brilliants. About her golden head was a wreath of wrought silver stars, as delicate as the morning mist, and curling backward was one snowy plume, which fell upon a shoulder as perfect as though carved by a master from marble. Her low cut corsage was encircled with a similar wreath, and the delicate workmanship seemed as though fashioned by fairy fingers. Resting on her left shoulder, and reaching almost to her knees, arranged so as to gracefully escape bending when she sat down, was a cluster of pale, pink roses, on their long stems. These roses were the only touch of color about her, save her golden hair, which was like spun sunshine, and her heavenly, blue eyes.

She lay back on her seat, panting, so worn was she with the effect of receiving the crowd of people in whom she could have no interest, and maintaining her perfect air of polite courtesy, which sat upon her so easily.

Suddenly she raised herself, for she heard a voice she had learned to know, and once had loved, say bitterly:

"I don't know why I came tonight. No, indeed, I care nothing about meeting this fair daughter of the house, Dean, why should I?"

"Because, Leigh, she is the most wonderfully glorious, fairylike girl I ever saw."

"Bitten," and Vivian shuddered at the new note in the voice, oh, heavens, was it possible it could thrill her again?"

"If you mean by that, do I love her? Yes, I do, with all the passion and reverence of my nature, and I am going to bend every energy of my nature to win her. My title is as good as her father's; my fortune is nearly as large, and I can place her in a position to be envied, as well as make her queen of my heart, but she is that, now," and he sighed deeply.

The scene was certainly a dramatic one. Behind the sheltering screen, a terribly wronged woman, glorious in her wonderful beauty, heard the man who by every law human and divine she was bound to hate, but who could stir her to the depths of her being, receive the confidence of one of her new friends, Lord Kingston, for whom she had a warm friendship, but nothing, relative to his passionate love. Full well did she know that Dean Kingston was a gentleman, as well as a nobleman, and that his love was pure and elevated, and that as his wife she would be able to rise so far above the ignorant little girl who had been led astray, that no one would dare say ought against her, not even the false, wicked man himself, who seemed Lord Kingston's friend.

The two men on the other side of the hedge were in violent contrast. Leighton Flemish, dark, glowing and fascinating, doubly so, since something during the past year had powdered his temples and placed a secret in his eyes which once looked so openly upon the world; Lord Kingston, with his tender, brown eyes, as open as the day, his soft, brown hair, slightly curling, and his boyish manner, which his big, cavalry moustache did not change. These two men were the ones who held the destiny of sweet Lady Vivian Gascoyne in their hands.

"Come, come," Lord Kingston said, lightly, "you must not speak so bitterly. I love all women for the sake of my pure darling, for so I dare to think of her, and I hate to think you have any feeling against the sex. Tell me, has a woman wronged you?"

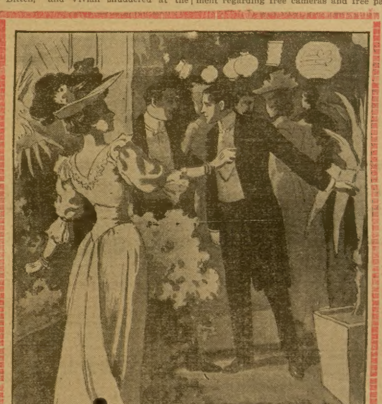
Vivian held her breath. She forgot that she was listening. Her heart was beating so she thought the two men would hear it, and she was afraid she would faint.

There was a pause, pregnant with meaning, then Leighton Flemish said slowly, as though the words were torn bleeding from his heart:

"No, God forgive me, I wronged her."

Yet, although there was real anguish in the words, how much easier it was for the man to say them than it had been for the poor girl to rest under the load the fact disclosed in them, had placed upon her innocent shoulders! He had cruelly wronged her, more than most men wrong women, for she had been such a child, so ignorant, so helpless, and he had known this and taken advantage of it all! The great wonder is that she could bear to hear his voice, to know that he was there, and not rush out to rend him, and yet, no wonder after all, for she loved him. That tells the story. Love, so pure and beautiful filled her heart and made it possible to forgive and to hope for a future in which there would be something else besides misery, betrayal and despair. She hoped, poor, hapless girl, she hoped!

The Ledger of next week will contain another installment of this very strange story, leading to further complications. All subscribers are invited to note our announcement regarding free cameras and free patterns on pages thirteen and fifteen. Now is the time to subscribe.



"No, God forgive me, I wronged her."

"FEED UP"

Is the Way to Make Old Men Young.

One of the most remarkable evidences of the power of proper food is found in the following interesting story by a Canadian:

"I am now 71 years of age and have been ailing more or less ever since I was 16 years old, part of the time an invalid suffering with stomach and bowel troubles.

"About two years ago, having learned of the good Grape-Nuts food was doing for some friends of ours, I resolved to try it myself and I immediately found help—more vigor and power of endurance.

"That summer the heat did not affect me as it did before I used Grape-Nuts and after about four months constant use I began to realize what it was to be well and found my bowels adjusting themselves so that now I am free from the old troubles. I had long despaired of such results and can safely say I am enjoying better health today than for many years past, for this wonderful food has literally made a new man of me." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

There is nothing wonderful about it, only sound, scientific reason that anyone can prove by trial.

Look in pkgs. for a copy of the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

Saving Time.

New York Clerk—I hold that it was the people, the great mass of the people, just such men as myself, who made public opinion, and forced rapid transit on New York.

Proprietor—It is certainly a great convenience. By the way, it used to take you an hour to get down-town in the morning, didn't it?

"Fully. I left the house every morning at half-past six in order to reach here by half-past seven. Now I can get down-town in a few minutes."

"Yes; great thing, great thing. But I notice you don't get here before half-past seven yet. By leaving the house at half-past six you should get here before seven. Hereafter, sir, I wish you to be at your post by quarter of seven. No use saving time, if we don't do something with it, you know."

HOW TO CURE CANCER

In from 10 to 20 days by my new home treatment, mailed to all sending address to DR. G. M. CURRY, 1462 CURRY BUILDING, LEBANON, OHIO. I refer to any bank or business firm in Lebanon.

The Hackman's Revenge.

Hackman—quarreling with his wife—There, now, see what you've done with y'r shrill tongue and y'r abuse. You've lost me a ten-dollar job—maybe a twenty-five-dollar one.

Wife—I have, have I?

"Yes, you have. Y'r voice can be heard outside, and a gent just stopped at the door, but, instead of ringin' the bell, he walked away, very thoughtful and solemn-like. And I promised you half the money I made on me next big job, too."

"Who was he?"

"He's a man what's been intendin' to elope with a girl and git married, but I guess he's changed his mind."

LOW ROUND TRIP RATES
TO NEW JERSEY, LONG ISLAND AND NEW ENGLAND COAST RESORTS.

The Lake Shore will sell excursion tickets to Asbury Park, Atlantic City, Long Branch, Sag Harbor, Newport, Block Island and all principal coast resorts. Return limit Oct. 31, 1906. Stop over of ten days at New York, Philadelphia, Niagara Falls, etc. For full particulars call at City Ticket Office, 180 Clark St., or write L. F. Vosburgh, G. W. P. A., Chicago.

More Information Wanted.

Lawyer—hotly—Do you mean to say, sir, that you do not consider Mr. De Lyre a man of his word?

Witness—I do.

"You do, eh? Do you mean to insinuate that he ever lies?"

"That's about it."

"Now, sir, attention! Do you mean to say that you would not believe him under oath?"

"No, I have not said that."

"Oh, ho! I thought I'd catch you. Then you don't say you would not believe him under oath?"

"No. I haven't heard him do any talking under oath yet."

Tea-Table Superstitions.

Of course, no one is superstitious in these enlightened days. Our great-grandmothers, however, were made very differently, and it is interesting to read of the mysterious meanings they attached to almost every little incident of everyday life that was at all out of the ordinary course.

The tea-table, for instance, afforded ample scope for the play of superstition in the feminine mind. If, when the tea was made, the lid was forgotten for a few minutes, it was a sure sign that some one would drop in to tea.

If a lady accidentally received two spoons with a cup of tea, she would be married within a year.

If any one helped herself to cream and milk before sugar, she would be crossed in love.

A tea-leaf floating in the cup of an unmarried lady was a sign that she had an admirer. If on this occasion the tea was stirred quickly, and the spoon, being then held upright in the middle of the cup, the tea-leaf was attracted to the spoon and clung to it, the admirer would be sure to call that day; but if the tea-leaf went to the side of the cup, he was not to be expected so soon.

Crawl out of your shell occasionally and look on the bright side of things.

THE SNYDACKER GIRL.

"Gosh!" exclaimed Marvin Parsons under his breath.

Washington Hancock followed the direction of his fellow loafer's eyes to where a young woman in a poppy-colored blouse and carrying a poppy-colored parasol was picking her way through the dust to cross the street.

"Look at them white gloves comin' up to her elbows!" whispered Parsons. "Hold me, Wash! Take a right good grip on my arm an' don't let go till she passes. Cracky!"

"She's with her pap," volunteered the storekeeper. "Him an' her comes down from St. Joe. The ol' man's in the lumber business an' he's be'n around to look at that white oak tract of Sim Atterbury's—calculates to buy it, I guess."

"See what you'd have ter buck up against, Marve?" said Hancock.

"I wouldn't keer," said Parsons.

"Jest as soon keep her company as not?"

"I certainly would."

"You're reckless," said Hancock. "It don't do fer a young man like you ter be too reckless when there's gals around fixed up that way. You ought ter be like Cal Davis over in Penrose township. Cal kep' a gal like that company one time.

"Her pap came down on business, too, an' brung her along to keep him comp'ny, only this business was a railroad. He was richer than mud an', shoo! if you'd seen the di'munds an' rubies an' rings an' bracelets an' silks an' satans that gal wore you wouldn't have looked twice at this un.

"Wa-all, sir, Cal Davis seen her passin along the street one time in Peterville, an' he got struck with the idee that he'd like to see her right clost, so what does he do but put on his Sunday-go-to-meetin's an' call around at the house they'd rented, with his buggy. He ast to see the gal. No, there wusn't nothin' bashful about Cal. He was a good-lookin' feller an' he knowed it an' he knowed most of the gals knowed it, an' he owned 200 acres of bottom land.

"Well, they ast him in an' after a while the gal came inter the room where he wus a-waitin' an' Cal spoke up an' allowed he came to see if she didn't want to take a buggy ride with him. He said she seemed to be sort o' s'prised, 's if she'd never been used to havin' comp'ny call on her, an' then she laffed an' fin'ly she allowed she'd go with him.

"Nex' night Cal wus around again. That time he didn't have the rig along. He came to do a regular sparkin'. The gal didn't seem noways unwillin', either, an' when her pap comes in she says: 'Pa, this is Mr. Cal Davis. He's come to set up with me, so now you're interdooced, we'll excuse you. An' the ol' man jest kinder opened his eyes an' looked Cal over and then he laffed an' went out. Didn't seem noways rusty. Cal didn't quite know what to make of it. He says she wus fixed up fit to kill—ruffles, an' frills, an' furbelows, an' di'munds sparklin' on her hands. Well, he jest sat there until she ast him if he reely had gotter go.

"Sat'dy night he hitched up to the buggy ag'in an' took her to the lit'ry. She let on that she enjoyed that right up to the handle an' she 'lowed there wusn't anythin' like it in St. Joe, ner Kansas City, fer that matter. Mebbe there wusn't.

"Course there wus a right smart o' talk about it. The boys deviled Cal more'n a little, but I guess they all wished they'd got his nerve. Blamed if he wusn't there up at the house settin' on the porch or suthin' 'most every night that he wusn't takin' the gal out buggy ridin'.

"Well, it went on that way for about a month stiddy an' then all of a sudden Cal married Lucindy Palmer. Say! You might have pushed me over with a spear of tickle-grass when I heard about it. Lucindy wus a mighty fine gal, but she hadn't no more style about her than a mud fence. She had a necklis o' coral beads an' a cameo ring an' that wus all the joolry she ever owned in her life. I couldn't b'lieve it until I met Cal a day or two after an' ast him if it reely wus so.

"'I reckon it is,' he says.

"'An' you beauin' that gal of ol' Snydacker's around all the time?' I says.

"'No beauin' about it,' he says; 'that gal was the slickest dressed gal ever come into these parts. Gosh! She had the purtiest little white han's an' the derndest little feet an', Wash, you seen how she dressed. Them fixin's she has—why, Christmus! Jest to see an' look at her or have her settin' alongside o' you in a buggy an' git a whiff o' that smellum-good! I tell you I never had such a time in my life.'

"'Then why didn't you spunk up an' marry her?' I says.

"'Shucks!' says Cal. 'Do you reckon I'd have took any pleasure in all that if I had to pay for it? Well, I guess not. Them fixin's cost money.'"

"Pretty cute, wasn't he?" remarked the storekeeper.

"I don't know," said Hancock. "After I left him I druv right by the Snydacker cottage an' the gal was settin out on the porch, more fixed up to kill than ever, an' settin' alongside her was a feller all dressed to kill, too, with one o' those single barrel eyeglasses an' baggy breeches tucked into his yaller boots. I reckon ol' man Snydacker knowed what he was a laffin' at."

Knew His Business.

Criticus—I have only one fault to find with this rural scene.

DeAuber—What is that?

Criticus—Why in the name of common sense did you paint those cows blue?

DeAuber—Oh, that's all right. The models I used were from the blue-grass section of Kentucky.

His Seasons.

Teacher—How many seasons are there in the year?

Boy—Two, sir.

Teacher—How do you make that out? Name them.

Boy—The football and cricketing seasons.

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A boy never lets his new watch run down.

Waiting works wonders if you work while you wait.

Matrimony has spoiled many a so-called friendship.

A good neighbor is one who has confidence in your judgment.

Some women are like bartenders—always getting things mixed.

Seaside hotels cause more men to go broke than do the breakers.

Admirers of the rural maid are apt to be in the hoe-beau class.

A man's most bitter enemy is the ex-friend who can no longer work him.

Even the man who expects the unexpected is apt to be surprised when it happens.

Marrying an heiress is often as unsatisfactory as any other get-rich-quick scheme.

Kansas may not really need so many harvest hands, but it always likes to advertise the size of its crops.

We always say we don't want our friends to grieve after we are gone—and they don't after the novelty wears off.

Do not judge Pittsburg solely by its millionaires. The town has many citizens who are admirable in every respect.

No woman ever misses an opportunity to laugh at any old joke for a few weeks after getting her new store teeth.

By the time all the medical experts get through testifying the judge and jury are likely to be insane whether Thaw is or not.

What will make the world doubt Dowie's insanity is the fact that he has always kept his eye resolutely on the main chance.

All traditions to the contrary notwithstanding, the graduate, in a vast majority of cases, is a shy and modest young person.

An Ohio farmer having heard of a man who successfully raised two-dollar bills wrote to his congressman for some of the seed.

With the opening of the Thaw case the ennui from which New York has been suffering ever since the Nan Patterson trial will be relieved.

It is easy to say what you would do in another man's place, but when it comes to doing the proper thing in your own place—well, that's different.

No wonder the czar admires America. In this country the executive head of the nation can talk back to the legislative body without fear of having his official chair yanked from under him.

THE DEUCE OF DIAMONDS;

Or

THE VAN ARDEN MYSTERY.

By MAJOR ALBION F. GRANT.

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Begun in No. 25, June 30. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be obtained from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN UNPLEASANT VISITOR.

Miss Enid Van Arden was in the act of entering the parlor the night after her interview with the young detective when the door-bell rang sharply and she looked for the servant, whose duty it was to answer such calls.

But, as the girl did not appear, she walked to the door herself and opened it.

A young man, handsome and with a fine figure, confronted her. She looked at him, waiting for him to present his name or mention his business, but for a little moment he simply stared at her after his bow.

"Is this Miss Enid Van Arden?" said he, when he had recovered himself.

"I am that person."

"Then, Miss Van Arden, I would like to have a few minutes private conversation if you will grant me the favor."

For a moment the young girl did not know what to do. Was this another detective who had injected himself into the enigma of crime which had not only startled the house, but the whole city.

However, she did not close the door against him, but held it open in a spirit of indecision.

Taking her irresolution for a favorable response, he came in and Enid, mechanically shut the door.

He followed her into the parlor where she turned upon him in the full glare of the lights.

"You will pardon me," said she, "but I do not know you."

"I am Dorsey Hyde," was the answer, as the speaker again looked her over.

"We are strangers," smiled Enid. "At least you are not expected, Mr. Hyde."

"That is true. I was not expected. I have a habit of turning up in different places at odd moments."

Enid was almost sure now that the man was a detective.

"Have you called because of the—the——"

"In a manner, yes," broke in the young man. "I have no doubt you are bothered a great deal with officers of the law and other people since the calamity?"

"We see them quite often."

He glanced hastily around the room.

"Are we alone, Miss Van Arden?" he asked, turning to her again.

"Quite alone."

"Mrs. Van Arden——"

"Is up stairs lying down with one of her nervous headaches."

"Nothing serious, I hope?"

"Not in the least, I think."

Dorsey Hyde, whom we have not seen since his rather exciting interview with Hollis, the detective, again let his gaze wander about the parlor.

"I am in a desperate strait," said he. "Indeed, I am what they call dead broke, a deucedly unpleasant state for a fellow like me to be in."

At this a little smile crept to Enid's lips and she thought of asking her visitor to depart at once.

"I fear you have come to the wrong place for help," she said, beating down the fear that rose to her heart.

"Time will tell," was the reply. "Miss Van Arden, I would like to have, say, five hundred."

"Sir?"

"I think your hearing is of the best," grinned Hyde. "I do not care to lift my voice for fear of disturbing your dear mother."

There rose in Enid's mind a spark of indignation. The very consummate coolness of the man irritated and disgusted her.

"Why should you come to me or this house for the sum you have named?" she queried.

"Because I could come to no better bank to have my check cashed."

"Really, I do not understand you. If you will come to the point without further ado we might understand one another better."

"Which is just what I shall do at once, thank you, Miss."

Enid drew back a step while Hyde went over to the table in the middle of the parlor and leaned lightly against it. The light was full upon his face and Enid saw in the countenance thus exposed, traces of dissipation.

"I think five hundred is a modest sum for my silence."

The girl started and paled a trifle.

"For your silence?" cried she. "Why should we wish your lips sealed? What we want now is evidence, not silence. We are not purchasing silence, here."

"Oh, you are not?" and the speaker's words were couched in an unmistakable sneer.

Enid did not speak.

"If I mistake not, a murder was lately committed under this roof. Anson Van Arden was hurried out of this world with the aid of a dagger."

"That is true, sir."

"He was killed the night of your mother's soiree?"

"Yes."

"The time was propitious. How easy it was for the assassin to steal from the crowded rooms and commit the crime."

At this, Enid flushed to the temples.

"You do not insinuate that my father was killed by one of mother's guests?" she exclaimed.

"Did I say so?"

"Not in so many words, but——"

"I haven't time to discuss this matter which largely concerns your future happiness, Miss Van Arden," he put in. "I'll take the five hundred without further ado."

"You will take nothing of the kind!" spoke the young girl, determidly. "We are not in the habit of paying blackmail."

"Not in the habit of paying blackmail, eh? By Jove! that's good."

"We are not, sir."

"Then I can sell my little secret elsewhere."

"You are at liberty to do so if you wish."

"By George! you're a keener. I did not expect to run up against a proposition like this," and he laughed. "You won't honor my demand?"

"For the money?"

"For the five hundred, a mere bagatelle for what I've got to keep. It's nothing to you folks. You've got millions."

"And you have the impudence of the Evil One!" exclaimed the young girl. "In the first place, I don't believe you have a secret to sell, and secondly, if you had, you wouldn't bring it here if you are in favor of justice."

"That's good again," grinned Dorsey Hyde. "Nothing to sell, eh? You shall see, my pretty parot."

Enid shot a swift glance toward the door and then crossed the velvet carpet reaching it in a second.

"You will consider this interview ended," said she, mustering all her courage. "Another word seems unnecessary. We don't compromise with crime. This tragedy is in the hands of the authorities, and the public as well as ourselves look to them for its solution."

"I say you're foolish," said Hyde.

"And I must say, that you are decidedly impudent and no doubt a thorough blackmailer."

"Come, come, little one. Let's argue the case."

"Argument is not necessary."

The young man looked Enid over from head to foot, his lips forming a derisive smile.

"I'll call ma down," said he. "Maybe she will prove more tractable."

"Mother, as I have said, is ill. You shall not disturb her," and Enid planted herself at the door. "If you will not go I shall call the footman."

"That's rather English. You will do nothing of the kind, [illegible]y lily lady," and he came forward, his eyes seeming to look her through. "I want five hundred dollars. I want it in cold, clean cash. You will either give it to me or see your mother dragged into court on a charge of murder. I know what I'm talking about. Just think of Mrs. Van taking a ride in the patrol."

Every vistage of color fled from the oval face of Enid Van Arden.

"My mother——"

"That's the stuff—Mrs. Van Arden! None other, my dear girl. I'll take five hundred and keep my secret."

CHAPTER XIV.

A BIRD OF ANOTHER FEATHER.

"She showed fight at first, but in the end she came under the wire in great shape. Cute trick, that o' mine. Worthy of the best of them. Now shall I try it on the other one with the glue? I think I shall. It's not late yet."

Mr. Dorsey Hyde lit a fresh cigar in his apartments of the fine hotel and walked the room, chuckling to himself while he blew the filmy smoke in every direction.

"Five hundred isn't made every night with that much ease," he continued. "She came down from her high perch, did that fine bit of femininity and all I've got to do when I go broke again is to call at the same place. She'll not tell her illustrious mother, not by a long shot. She'll keep the little secret from Mrs. Van and be my banker whenever I choose to call. Now I'm off for a plucking of the other golden pheasant. I hope I won't flush the bird, but trust me to do the right thing at the right time."

Five minutes later Dorsey Hyde was the sole occupant of a carriage that carried him rapidly over the streets. He had thrown his feet upon the opposite cushions and while he jolted he smoked serenely, like one thoroughly satisfied with himself.

Presently the carriage drew to the curb and the driver opened the door.

"Mrs. Bodley-Grant's," said he, as Hyde tumbled out.

The young man looked up at the house and seemed to take a mental survey of it.

In another moment he bounded up the steps, rang the bell and drew back.

The door swung open in a jiffy, exposing a brilliantly lighted hall with rich carpets and articles of virtu in profusion, mementoes of more than one trip to other lands.

"Mrs. Bodley-Grant," said he to the servant.

"Your name, please."

"The Duke. That will be sufficient. She'll remember me."

The servant vanished and soon came back beckoning Hyde to follow him.

In a second he had opened a door on the left of the hall and motioned the caller to enter.

As Dorsey Hyde crossed the threshold he caught sight of a woman who rose from a deep, plush-chair and stood facing him with the dignity of an offended queen.

"You?" cried Mrs. Bodley-Grant, as the visitor halted on one of the large butterfly figures in the rich carpet. "You? What brought you to my house?"

The keen, black eyes of the beautiful globe-trotter seemed to transfix the caller like a pair of arrows.

"Why not?" said he. "You thought you had lost me at the third cataract?"

"I haven't thought anything about it," answered the millionairess. "It was immaterial to me, wholly so."

Her clear voice was full of bitter contempt and her eyes emphasized her language in a marvelous manner.

"I did not know you were in America," she went on.

"Well, I seem to be here, Irene."

"There!" cried the woman with a majestic sweep of her hand. "No familiarity, if you please. I will have none of it."

"But, my dear Irene——"

The face before Hyde grew white and red by turns and all in the brief space of a second.

"What is your business here?" she demanded. "You will state it and go."

"Business? Oh, yes. You haven't forgotten me, then?"

"I recognize you as the poor hanger on of our caravan, a man who was glad to get the crumbs that fell from our table in Egypt. You hadn't the honor of a fellah. They would have scourged you in Alexandria if I had not come to your rescue. I paid your bills at Cairo because I took pity on one of my fellow countrymen. Now, sir, what is your business with me?"

Mrs. Bodley-Grant seemed to increase at least an inch in statue when she finished and she looked Hyde over from head to foot with the old expression of utter contempt.

"You're a little severe," said he. "A man runs in hard luck at times. One cannot always have sunshine."

"We will not discuss that point. Come to the business if you please."

"All right. You shall have it from the shoulder, since you insist."

"That's what I want."

"I don't want to see you get into trouble, Irene," he went on, before she could suppress the mention of her name. "I have always admired you——"

"Silence! If you are coming round to that again you can desist now and remain silent."

"As I was going to say, I don't want to see you in trouble. I entertain the greatest respect for you. But I am in hard luck."

"Begging, eh?"

"I'm no beggar!" he flashed, starting back a step. "I never begged."

"You accepted alms in Egypt."

"Curse you!" cried he. "If you don't care to hear me I'll let you reap the whirlwind."

"Which implies that I have sown the wind."

"You've sown it in great shape and the harvest never fails. I would like to have, say, one thousand dollars, Irene."

"You? One thousand—from me?"

"Yes, my dear. I'll take it and keep mum."

"In regard to what?"

Dorsey Hyde coolly folded his arms and looked into the face before him.

"Can't you guess?"

"Come, you needn't talk in riddles. I always was a poor guesser and if I pay you one thousand dollars I must have something for it."

"You shall have it—my silence."

Mrs. Bodley-Grant leaned toward the young man and seemed to devour him with her eyes.

"Your silence, poor fool?" she said in low but impressive tones. "What do you think you know?"

"A good deal."

"You haven't anything to sell. It is another trick. You live by your wits."

"And by your audacity."

Eye met eye in that sumptuous parlor for a moment and then Dorsey Hdye crept across the floor with the movenemts of a tiger.

"What do I know, eh? I know about the Crosada. I know about the deuce of diamonds. I know that Anson Van Arden was killed and that the sleuths are on the wrong scent. The true secret is mine, my dear. I can walk yonder, open that drawer and take out the sign of the Crosada."

The face of Mrs. Bodley-Grant tinged a rich crimson.

"You can do that, can you?" she said.

"Yes."

"Try it, please."

Thus bantered, Dorsey Hyde crossed the carpet and halted at the rich secretary that stood nearly in the middle of the parlor.

"I'd rather not," said he, looking over his shoulder.

"I want you to find the sign—if it is there."

He bit his lip underneath his moustache and turned again to the desk.

For a moment his back was turned to the waiting woman and that moment he was startled by an ominous click behind him.

It was a sound he had probably heard before for he turned like one serpent-struck and then reeled away.

Like a statue in the middle of the room, with the light full on her dazzling face stood the beautiful globe-trotter, and Mr. Dorsey Hyde was looking into the barrel of a revolver!

Not a lash quivered behind the polished weapon. Not a muscle tensed behind the hand that held the weapon in a grip of steel.

"Dog! fiend!" came over the leveled revolver. "You deserved death in Egypt. You more than deserve it here. The door is yonder, villain! I give you three seconds. If you are still here, then I shall blow your brains out!"

A man, white-faced, staggered toward the door and in another second had tumbled down the broad steps into the street.

CHAPTER XV.

A WOMAN'S CONFESSION.

"Well, what think you by this time, boy?"

Tibbals had dropped in upon Hollis, the young detective, a day or two after their last interview.

Hollis looked into the old detective's face and smiled.

"I think the trail is turning," said he at last.

"In the right direction?"

"I think so."

"And the woman in the case——"

"I'm not quite ready to coincide in your opinion," was the interruption. "At least not for a while yet," modifyingly.

Tibbals did not answer, but took a cigar from his pocket and silently lighted it.

"You haven't found the missing key, yet?" he asked at last, his face just visible through the blue smoke.

"Not yet."

"Does the trail you speak of seem to lead to it?"

"Perchance."

"You haven't interviewed Cephas Bloom but the one time?"

"Only once."

"And your 'friend Irene,' as you dub her?"

"I haven't seen her since our last talk."

"Nor Miss Van Arden?"

"See here, Tibbals,' 'cried Hollis, a little distrait. "What if you were beating about the wrong bush?"

"I don't think I am, however."

"But there's a possibility of it, eh?"

"Not even the shadow of one, boy."

"Then I'll draw out of the case and let you carry out your theories."

"No! It is your case, Howell, not mine. You are the sleuth on this trail. Go ahead."

Just then the door received a light wrap and Hollis opened it. A boy stood before him with a letter in his hand.

As the detective took it the boy said no answer was required so far as he knew and vanished toward the head of the stair.

Glancing at the superscription of the letter, Hollis started a little.

"I must be going," said he with a glance at Tibbals. "It is not necessary for you to vamoose. You can keep house till I return. I may not be gone long."

"Well, if you really don't care, I'll smoke here awhile. It's a good place for meditation."

"Meditate all you want to and if any visitors call say that I will be back between now and midnight."

The old detective looked at his young friend, but did not speak and in another minute he was alone.

Hollis, once in the cab which he had called to the curb, took occasion to re-read the letter the boy had brought.

Traced in delicate writing, a woman's, undoubtedly, it ran as follows:

"My dear Howell—Please call upon receipt of this. I have a little matter to discuss with you, a matter, perhaps of some importance to you just now.

Irene."

The letter, then was from Mrs. Bodley-Grant and Hollis, forthwith instructed the driver to take him to the fair globe-trotter's house on Torrey Hill.

The night was not far advanced. The city clocks had just proclaimed the hour of eight and while the cab rattled over the street in direction of the abode of the rich on Torrey Hill, the detective tried to guess what had called forth that missive.

Then he recalled the dark suspicions Tibbals had advanced a short time before. Now he was on his way to the house of one of the women under the old sleuth's ban—Mrs. Bodley-Grant.

The ride gave Hollis opportunity to go over the whole case from its inception. He had to confess that, as yet, he was almost wholly at sea. The needle of conviction had shifted now from one point to another and he—well, he smiled when he thought the dark matter over.

The moment he entered the mansion on Torrey Hill and stood face to face with its beautiful tenant, Tibbals' suspicion fell from her like arrows from a stone wall.

"I have done you a wrong," said Irene Bodley-Grant, speaking first. "I should have told you of it at first and I hope you may forgive me."

"I do not understand," said the detective. "You have done me no wrong so far as I can see."

"Of course you did not know it. But since we last met certain things have happened which brought about my invitation to you to call at once."

"I am here, as you see, but please do not think that I came hither with the least suspicion——"

"For which I thank you," interrupted the woman. "You remember that I informed you about the Crosada, the deadly Order whose sign is the deuce of diamonds?"

"Yes," and Hollis thought of the torn card he had seen flutter from her escritoire.

"I should have shown you the bit of paste-board I possess," and she walked over to the desk, opened it and drew forth the very thing Hollis knew was there.

"I know you are looking for the exact mate to the piece of card you found in the death chamber of Anson Van Arden. You have your piece with you?"

"Yes."

Hollis drew forth his note book and plucked the card from it.

"As you see, I have the half of a deuce of diamonds. Let us compare the backs. Ah! they are identical."

Startled to a degree, Hollis could only look up into the handsome face before him.

"It may seem strange, inexplicable to you," pursued Mrs. Bodley-Grant. "Now please compare the torn edges of these bits of card. See if they fit."

Hollis laid the two pieces on the table and put them together with the greatest care, knowing that a pair of sloe-black eyes were watching him.

All at once he looked up into the fair face above his shoulder and said with a smile of deep relief:

"Though the backs are the same, the edges do not fit."

"Make sure of it," said the woman. "I was at the fatal soiree."

"You cannot make these cards fit," was the reply. 'You may try for yourself."

"Then I am out of the list?"

"So far as I am concerned you were never in it."

"But do you not think it strange that the backs of those remnants of a brace of cards should be the same?"

"I admit that it is peculiar."

"Inexplainable to you, no doubt?"

"Quite so."

Mrs. Bodley-Grant took a seat at the table and, resting her chin in her hands while her elbows touched the table, she said:

"Not so very strange either when you come to think of it. I belong to the Crosada."

Hollis started as though he had received a sudden sentence of doom.

"You?" cried he. "You a member of the Crosada?"

"Yes, Howell."

"I cannot think of such a thing."

"But it is true. I was made a member under protest across the seas. I happened to stumble upon a secret meeting of the dread Order and, in order to save my life, became a member. That is why the bit of card, or in other words the sign of the Order, is in my possession."

She smiled and seemed to enjoy the detective's surprise.

"I did not kill Anson Van Arden," she went on. "With this sign in my possession I might have fallen under suspicion. I sent for you to say this and to tell you that an attempt has been made to blackmail me."

"By whom?"

"By a poor devil whom I met in Egypt and who knows that I belong to the Crosada. He now calls himself Dorsey Hyde."

"That infernal rascal? I know him," said Hollis.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE HUMAN TIGER'S LEAP.

Mrs. Bodley-Grant then proceeded and detailed her interview with the blackmailer.

"I've had a little interview with him myself," said Hollis. "He told me to ask Cephas Bloom for the whereabouts of the missing door-key."

"And you asked him?"

"Yes, at his office."

"Well?"

"I got beautifully and coolly repulsed."

"I thought as much."

"But how did you get along with Mr. Hyde?"

"Oh, as to that rascal, he left the house as empty as when he came."

"Did he want much?"

"Only a little thousand. He threatened to sell his secret if I did not disgorge."

"Indeed? He is a cool customer."

"He knew that I possessed the sign of the Crosada, but the sign of the trigger was too much for him," and Irene showed her teeth in a witching smile.

Hollis was silent for a moment, his brain was in a flame of eagerness; he wanted to ask a dozen questions at one and the same time.

"Do you think I went to the wrong party for the missing door-key?" said he.

"Perhaps."

"You do not say no, then?"

"In the first palce, Cephas Bloom is too cowardly to commit a murder."

"But why did Dorsey Hyde refer me to him?"

"Ah! I see you do not know, you haven't inquired much as yet, int[illegible]amily secrets."

"Not to any great ext[illegible]," smiled Hollis. "But I fear this trail is leading in that direction."

"Think you so? You do not know who Dorsey Hyde really is."

"I haven't investigated as yet."

"Let me enlighten you on that little point which in your mind is still opaque," resumed Mrs. Bodley-Grant. "You may have heard that Cephas Bloom is a widower——"

"I know that much."

"Do you know that he had a son?"

"I have heard that too, a boy who has a penchant for traveling."

"Yes. A roustabout son who might today be a millionaire and in business with his father, but for the Ishmaelitish blood in his veins."

"A family prodigal, eh?"

"The Absalom of the Bloom family! Well, Howell, I will not mystify you any longer. In Mr. Dorsey Hyde, behold Nixon Bloom."

"The rich banker's son?"

"The same. I thought we lost him at the third Cataract, but he has turned up as blackmailer."

"Why doesn't he go to his parent for money?"

"There is an uncrossable gulf between the two. I don't believe Nixon Bloom would stain his hands with blood, but when one falls so low as to blackmail a woman there's no telling what he will not do."

"Do you think the father knows of his son's presence in the city?"

"He undoubtedly does. I do my private banking at the house of Van Arden & Bloom and not long ago I saw the young man come out of his father's private office."

"Before the commission of the Avenue crime?"

"No, two days later."

Hollis thought for a moment.

"Did Nixon Bloom ever join the Crosada?"

"I do not know, but he was in Florence when I became a member."

"And his father?"

"Is the senior Bloom a member, do you mean? I do not know for sure. I understand that there is an American lodge of the Order, but I have never investigated."

Hollis's eyes wandered to the torn cards lying on the table and then came back to Irene's face.

"When I find the card that exactly matches this piece discovered in the death chamber I will have a clear clew, eh?" he asked.

"Don't you think you will, Howell?"

"The card and the door-key! The person who killed Anson Van Arden locked the door from the outside."

"How could that be?" cried the beautiful woman, falling back and gazing into Hollis's face.

"By simply inserting little grippers into the lock, catching the key and turning it."

"I see! What keen men you human ferrets are! I would never have thought of that, but, when Miss Enid told me that the key was missing I tried to figure out something, but, woman-like, failed. It remains for you, Howell, to enlighten me."

"The key, when found," continued Hollis, "will bear marks of the grippers."

"And bring the guilty to justice?"

"I hope so."

Then the detective leaned across the table and resumed:

"It is a terrible thought, Irene," said he. "I do not care to entertain it for a single moment, but Mrs. Van Arden who was sick in her room at my last visit came up stairs and listened at the door of the fatal chamber while I was talking with Miss Enid."

"Are you sure it was Mrs. Van?"

"It could have been no other," said Hollis, emphatically. "I heard her go down the steps and caught sight of her at the foot of the stair."

"I have nothing to say," said Mrs. Bodley-Grant. "Flora and I have been friends for years. She married Van Arden solely for his wealth, for he was rich years ago, but she never loved him. An ice-berg seemed to have anchored itself between those two people. The world did not know it, but the berg was there just the same. But I am detaining you, Howell. I sent for you to unburden myself as I have done for I wanted to set myself right in your eyes. There's no telling what Nixon Bloom, alias Dorsey Hyde, may resort to."

Hollis thanked the beautiful woman for what she had told him and took his departure with a load lifted from his mind.

"I could disabuse Tibbals' mind of at least one suspicion," he remarked to himself as he was driven back. "The old fellow with his usual haste, coupled with his hatred of womankind in general, has slipped a cog for once. Ha. I won't say a word about this matter to him just yet," and he settled back among the cushions and reflected till the cab landed him at the curb in front of his lodgings.

Wondering if Tibbals was still "on guard," Hollis bounded up the stairs and entered his room.

But for a ray of light that came in from the street it was dark.

"The old boy concluded not to wait for me, I see," said Hollis, aloud. "Well, that relieves me in a measure for I won't be a target for his shafts."

He was about to turn on the light when he was startled by a slight noise in one corner of the room.

As he turned in that direction something came bounding out of it like a tiger.

In another moment a pair of lithe and strong arms went around Hollis's body and pinioned him in an embrace of steel.

The detective struggled and attempted to wrest himself from the coils of the unknown, but was borne back, narrowly missing the table, and forced to the floor just beyond it.

Not a word was spoken by the lips so close to his face.

Hollis at once caught sight of a mask and the next, saw it not.

The arms of the fiend loosened at last and suddenly the hands were transfixed to his throat.

The infernal fingers as cold as steel, seemed to find their way behind his windpipe, his struggles ceased, his breath went like the gasps of a dying man and at last the darkness of death seemed to enshroud everything!

This thrilling and extraordinary story of love and tragedy will be continued in the Ledger of next week. If you are not already a subscriber, we strongly urge you to send in your subscription and get the remainder of this captivating story and other thrilling masterpieces that are about to appear in these pages. Boys and girls may desire our free cameras, as announced on page thirteen, and women should subscribe and receive our free patterns in all the new summer styles, as advertised on page fifteen of this paper.

Girls Will be Girls.

"Where is he, Jeanette?"

"Gone."

"Gracious! Is the engagement really broken?"

"I should say so. I hope I shall never see him again."

"This is awful! You have my sympathy, dear."

"I don't need sympathy. Didn't I tell you I hated him?"

"All right, dear, I am going and——"

"W-wait a minute."

"Well?"

"If—if you should accidently meet him anywhere would—would you tell him that I still live in the same place and—and that I stay home and sew now the nights he used to call? And—and if he should care to come back—but, of course, I would never think of such a thing—would—would you be—be my bridesmaid?"

Funny Creatures.

"Women are funny creatures," said George, the farmer's son, the other day. "There's no use trying to be civil to them. Now, I was standing by a gateway leading down to the river this morning, and a very stout lady came up to me and said: 'Young man, can I go through this gate to the river?' 'Yes, ma'am,' I said; 'at least, I think you can mangge, for a load of hay went through this morning, and it didn't hurt.' And then she gave me a look that made me feel as if I would like to shrink into my boots. Yes, women are funny creatures."

YOUR DARK EYES.

I never knew that one could rise
Above the common every day,
Until I read in your dark eyes
That love will ever find a way.

I knew not that man could defy
The dangers that seem to appall,
Until I looked in your dark eyes
And felt and knew that love dares all.

I would not leave a world like this,
While I can look in those dark eyes,
For all the glory, all the bliss,
Of an eternal paradise.

A TERRIBLE PUNISHMENT.

Prospect Park South, a beautiful suburb of Flatbush, N. Y., was enveloped in deep gloom. A fearful storm raged, and the pattering of the rain was ever and anon silenced by the fitful peals of thunder.

Twice within three months had the home of George S. Winterbottom, on Argyle Road, been invaded by burglars, but the police had failed to trace them.

Now he lay in his comfortable dormitory enjoying the slumbers of the just, for in his dreams was no recollection of his previous misfortunes, caused by the advent of the burglarious intruders.

Suddenly he gave a start, for his wife had prodded him with her elbow.

"Hello!" he exclaims, "what's up?"

"Hark, George! Do you not hear a noise?" the wife asks.

"Nothing but the tumult of the storm. Please let me go to sleep."

"George Winterbottom, there's somebody in the house! I hear a noise in the kitchen!"

Mr. Winterbottom quickly drew his pistol from under his pillow, sat up in bed, and listened.

"It's our Maltese cat," he grumbled drowsily.

"A cat doesn't wear boots, and go around opening the doors. Hark!"

He listened again. All was quiet. But presently an unmistakable sound, as of somebody moving about on the floor below, aroused even the sleepy Winterbottom. Steps seemed to be approaching the stairway. George held his revolver in readiness, softly stepped out of bed, went to the door of the room and got behind it, first having cautioned his wife in a whisper to make no noise, and leave matters entirely in his hands.

Noiselessly and stealthily came the steps to the staircase, and in a few moments the dim light of the night lamp on the dressing-case fell upon the stalwart form of a man whose face was concealed by a mask.

Mrs. Winterbottom uttered a musical scream at sight of him, the baby woke up and howled, and, before the burglar could recover from the momentary confusion into which this unexpected reception had thrown him, George bravely confronted him with a revolver.

"You infernal scoundrel!" he shouted. "Don't you move a muscle, or I'll send a ball whistling through you!"

The revolver hadn't been loaded for a year or more, and George knew it, but the burglar didn't.

The despicable wretch stood perfectly still.

"Remove your mask!" sternly commanded George.

The burglar complied. With ashen face and mean, hangdog look he stood there and said not a word. Mrs Winterbottom had recovered her self-possession, but the baby continued to howl

"It would serve you right, you sneaking, contemptible villain," said George, in a deep, tragic voice, "if I should shoot you where you stand. I believe I'll do it, anyhow."

"Mercy! Mercy!" pleaded the trembling wretch. It's the first time I ever broke into a house. You'll never again see me in Flatbush. Please let me go."

"It's the first time you were ever caught at it! It'll be the last. Down on your knees!"

"Don't shoot him, George!" begged his wife. "Think of the carpet—three dollars a yard in Loeser's!"

"Listen!" said George, coming closer to the kneeling burglar. "Hold up your hands!"

While the fellow's hands were up, George rifled his pockets. He took therefrom two loaded revolvers, a knife, a dagger, a "jimmy," a bottle of chloroform, and a sand-bag.

"Your first offense, is it?" said George. "For a novice at the business you carry a pretty good kit of tools. Stand up!"

The burglar obeyed.

"Are you a man of family?"

"Yes, sir. Oh, please——"

"Stop your whining."

A look of hard, stern, relentless purpose settled on George's face. He pointed the revolver at the abject scoundrel's head again.

"Go and take that baby!" he commanded.

"What—what for?"

"Never mind what for! You go and take that baby!"

"George," exclaimed Mrs. Winterbottom, in dismay, "what do you mean?"

"I know what I am about, Emily. Pick up that squealing infant, you villain!"

The man obeyed.

"Handle it carefully!"

"Yes, sir."

"Now walk the floor with it!"

For four long hours George Winterbottom held that empty revolver leveled at the head of the miserable man, and compelled him to walk up and down the room with the crying, squirming infant in his arms.

At daybreak the cringing, crawling villain was permitted to sneak away from the premises, a broken-hearted man.

His raven hair had turned gray in that one night.

It was a horrible retribution, but who shall say it was not deserved. And thus we learn, dear reader, that crime sometimes brings its own punishment, and that the way of the transgressor continues to be hard, even in Prospect Park South.

JOKES AND

A Pious Fraud.

"Well, no," said the landlord of the Pruntytown tavern, in reply to the inquiry of the patent-churn man, "there ain't been anything of importance going on here of late but the sock-social given by the ladies of the Methodist Church, one night last week."

"Sock-social, eh? I presume each gentleman attending was presented with a pair of socks? Was that the idea?"

"That was about the idea possessed in advance by the gentlemen in question, when they were told that at the sock-social they would be greeted by a complete surprise; which they, by gosh, were, for the sock part of it was that they were 'socked' for enough money to pay for reshingling the roof of the the parsonage."

The Cat Out.

Mr. Highliver—to his valet—James, you are evidently an honest man, and I've never missed a penny since I had you, but I don't see how a man on your wages can have so much spending money.

James—You buy a mighty big lot o' champagne, sah, fo' you'se'f an' you' friends.

"Indeed, I do—enormous quantities, best imported, fresh from France. Mr. Wineman doesn't give you a commission, does he?

"Oh, no sah; but he pays me a big price fer the empty bottles."

Still Increasing.

Gunner—This marine journal predicts that within ten years they will build a great ocean liner that will bring over 10,000 people.

Guyer—That is nothing compared to the number the original Mayflower brought over.

Lullaby.

Magistrate—You are accused of attempting to hold a pedestrian up at 2 o'clock this morning. What have you to say in your own behalf?

Prisoner—I am not guilty, your honor, I can prove a lullaby.

Magistrate—You mean an alibi?

Prisoner—Well, call it what you like, but my wife will swear that I was walking the floor with the baby at the hour mentioned in the charge.

Not So Wonderful.

"Goats," remarked the scientific boarder, "can digest anything they choose."

"Well, what of that?" rejoined the unscientific person. "A man can also digest anything he chews."

Got the Quarter.

Dude—to chance acquaintance—That shabby looking fellow is making right for us. Bet he wants to borrow money. He, he! I'll get ahead of him. Please, sir, can't you lend me a quarter, or a dime, to get something to eat?

Shabby Fellow—Certainly—hands out a quarter—"Now, young man, if you are through begging of this gentleman, I would like to speak to him. He is one of the depositors in my bank."

Such Is Life.

"After all," remarked the loafer who was holding down an empty box, "there is nothing in a name."

"There isn't in yours, at least," rejoined the grocer.

"What do you mean?" queried the loafer.

"Just what I said," replied the grocer. "Everything you have is in your wife's name."

Shattering Sentiment.

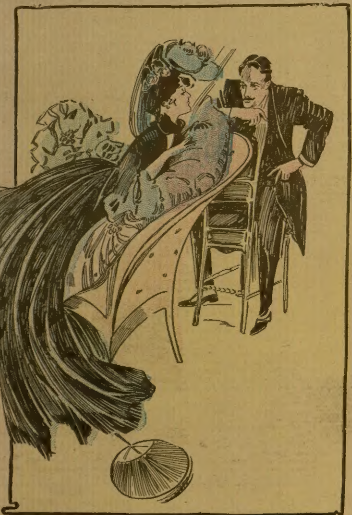
"Ah, the bugler!" exclaimed the beautiful girl graduate. "Doesn't it always bring something to your mind to hear the call of the bugle?"

"Yes," yawned the corpulent and unromantic matron, "it always reminds me that I have a pair of scissors to grind, and if I don't hurry the scissors grinder will get out of sight."

Explanation.

Her—I can't understand why Mildred has so many admirers. She neither plays nor sings.

Him—That's the answer.



Augustus (to his fiancee)—Couldn't you kiss me a little more affectionately, dear?
Arabella—Well, I do my best; but you are the first one that ever has complained!

All in the Dark.

Miss Watkyns—Where is Mr. Cashleigh now?

Mr. Wilkyns—I don't exactly know. Somewhere up in Canada.

Miss Watkyns—Why, I didn't know that he was going away.

Mr. Wilkyns—The bank directors didn't, either.

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A Watchful Statesmen.

"You are taking a great deal of interest in this investigation."

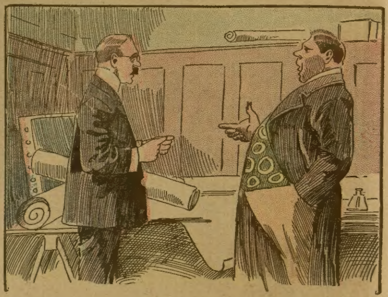
"Yes," answered the statesman. "I have to give it close personal attention. I want to make sure it doesn't develop anything I don't care to have known."

A Broken Romance.

He—Do you remember that rich girl I was so thick with at the beach?

She—The one that looked like a little china doll?

"Precisely! Well, she's broke.—Yonkers Statesman.



Mr. Meanly—It's something dreadful. My wife is always asking me for money. It's money, money, money, all the time.
Mr. Japson—Why, whatever does she do with all this money?
Mr. Meanly—Eh? Oh, I don't know. I haven't given her any yet.

Safety in Flight.

The multimillionaire was very considerate of the strange young man's welfare.

"Ah, my poor brother," he said in silky tones, "are you serving Mammon?"

"No, good sir," replied the young man, as he reached in his pocket, "I am serving subpoenas."

With a wild leap the multimillionaire reached his motor car and vanished toward the state line.

The Baggage-Smasher's Fate.

First Baggage-smasher—Say, Jake, I'm thinkin' it 'ud be money in our pockets if we'd begin handlin' trunks more kearful.

Jake—Why wud it?

"Because the more we smash 'em, the bigger, and stronger, and heavier they make 'em. I've struck three this mornin' made out o' reg'lar boiler iron. Me back's 'most broke."

The New Board.

"What do you think of the new board of directors?"

"I think it about a tie. Half of them look capable of anything, and the other half look capable of nothing."

The Victorious Wife.

Arabella—Are you really happy in your married life?

Alicia—Yes, very. We have lots of quarrels and I always win.

The Gentle Roll.

Stubb—I see they are going to banish professional gamblers from the big liners and stop passengers from losing so often.

Penn—Well, there is one thing they can never stop some of the passengers from losing.

Stubb—What is that?

Penn—Why, their meals.

He Certainly Would

"In this instance," explained the professor of surgery, to the group of medical students, "the left leg of the patient is somewhat shorter than the right limb, thus causing the patient to limp. Now, Mr. Fresh, what would you do in a case like this?"

"Well," responded the alert Mr. Fresh. "I guess I'd limp, too."

Too Much for Him.

"No," said the man who occasionally lets out an audible thought. "I can't figure it out."

"Can't figure what out?" queried the party with the rubber habit.

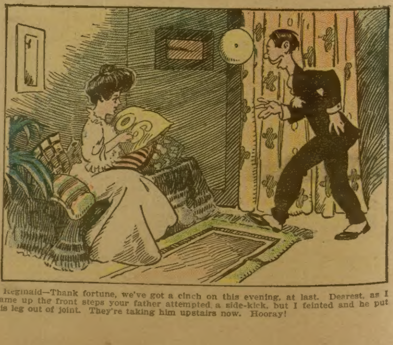
"Why all the women under 60 are not over 30," answered the noisy thinker.

Best Part.

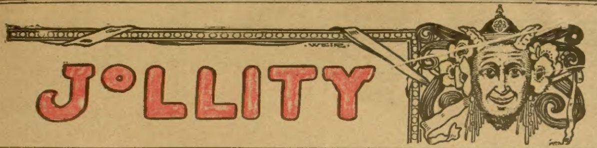
"Did you enjoy your trip to Paris?" asked the tonsorial artist.

"You bet I did," replied the victim in the chair. "I couldn't understand a word the barbers said to me."

THE STRENUOUS WOOING.



Reginald—Thank fortune, we've got a cinch on this evening, at last. Dearest, as I came up the front steps your father attempted a side-kick, but I feinted and he put his leg out of joint. They're taking him upstairs now. Hooray!



JOLLITY

Something Doing.

Meeker—We had a house-warming last night.

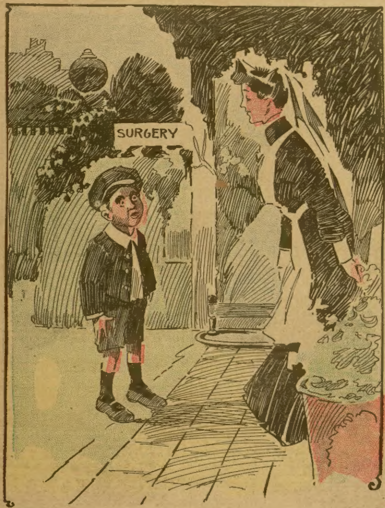
Bleeker—Why, have you moved?

Meeker—No; but when I reached home from the lodge at midnight I found my wife's mother there.

Masculine Idea.

Gunner—My wife says there is going to be a great sale of watered silk downtown today. What do women use watered silk for, anyway?

Guyer—Watered silk? Why—er—I guess they make bathing suits of it.



Small Boy—I want to see Doctor Jones, please.

Maid—He's not in now.

Small Boy—Well, as soon as he gets back, will you tell him to come to our house—sharp—and take away that baby he left last week. It's in the way!

Frightened.

As the Judge approached Maud Muller his corpulent companion leaped from the buggy and made for the tall timbers.

"Gracious!" exclaimed Maud, a little later. "Who is that?"

"Why, he's a trust official," explained the wise old judge.

"But why did he run?"

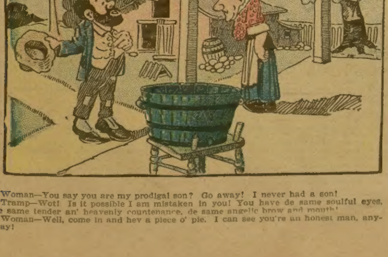
"He thought that rake you had was a muck rake."

Regular Ostriches.

"This, ladies and gentlemen," said the guide, "is a real theatrical chophouse. You will notice the signs on the wall, 'Watch your hat,' and 'Keep an eye on your umbrella.'"

"Great Gooseberries!" exclaimed the old farmer in the party. "I often heard tell that these here actor folks were half starved, but I didn't think they would eat hats and umbrellas."

TACT WON.



Woman—You say you are my prodigal son? Go away! I never had a son!

Tramp—Wot! Is it possible I am mistaken in you! You have de same soulful eyes, de same tender an' heavenly countenance, de same angelic brow and mouth!

Woman—Well, come in and hev a piece o' pie. I can see you're an honest man, anyway!

Love's Young Dream.

Miss De Sweet—Do you like pearls?

Mr. Nicefellow—I do not care for separate pearls; they are too tame; but I admire them in rows or clusters.

Miss De S.—So do I. If there is anything I love, it is a pearl necklace—large pearls, you know. Pa gave me one some years ago, but, although it is very handsome, I do not care much for it, because the pearls are rather small.

Mr. N.—Oh! Small pearls should never be put into a necklace. Only the largest size are worthy of such display. For my part, I much prefer diamond necklaces.

Miss De S.—Aren't they lovely! The pure white diamonds especially.

Mr. N.—It's a pity, though, the colored diamonds are out of fashion; but I think they are coming back. I saw a necklace today with every tenth diamond colored, and the effect was wonderfully brilliant. It was at Biffany's; quite cheap, too. By the way, will you marry me?

Miss De S.—Oh! this is so sudden! Yes, my love, I will.

Miss De Sweet—half an hour later—Clara Nubbins, next door, is engaged, too; but I think her lover showed shocking taste in the selection of her ring, it is so big and clumsy; and, besides, it seems sort of brazen. It has six large diamonds set with pearls.

Mr. Nicefellow—For an engagement-ring there is nothing neater than plain gold. Biffany has them for a dollar.

Masculine Variety.

The two men on the back platform of the suburban trolley car were talking about the little woman in the blue sunbonnet who was watering flowers by the roadside.

"The biggest gossip in the country," said the tall man. "I detest gossipers."

"So do I," replied the short man, "and she is certainly the queen of them all. But then maybe she is worried and gossips for pastime. They say her first husband ran away with the cook."

"You don't say! Well, I heard that her second husband rolls home at dawn and you can hear him singing a block."

"He must be a bird. The iceman told my wife they only eat two meals a day and her daughter is going to marry a lad who only makes $4 a week."

"Well, I'll declare! But I certainly hate gossipers."

"Yes, so do I."

Those "Experienced" Writers.

The man with the dark lantern dropped his booty in a hidden pocket and bade the victim a polite good-night.

"I—I hope this is the last I shall see of you," retorted the gentleman in pink pajamas.

"Not at all, sir," assured the burglar. "I shall be around in several weeks without fail."

"What? Coming to rob me again?"

"Oh, no. Just coming around to sell you my great book entitled 'How to Be a Gentleman Burglar.'"

His Last Chance.

An old Scotch gravedigger was remonstrated with one day at a funeral for making a serious overcharge for digging a grave.

"Well, you see, sir," said the old man, in explanation, making a motion with his thumb towards the grave, "him and me had a bit o' a tift twa or three years syne owre a braw watch I selt him, and I've never been able to get the money out o' him yet. 'Now,' says I to myself, 'this is my last chance, and I'd better tak' it.'"—Smiles.

Of Course She Couldn't.

"The cook ate those Welsh rabbits I made last evening."

"Gracious!"

"What's the matter?"

"Why, who will get breakfast?"

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POST OFFICE

Walter (unaccustomed to poultry life)—How long must my hen sit on the eggs?

Friend—Oh! three weeks for hens and four for ducks.

Friend (a few weeks later)—Well, how are the chickens progressing?

Walter—There weren't any at the end of three weeks, so I took the hen off, as I didn't want ducks.—Sketchy Bits.

◆

Bliss.

Sue—Dere was a big lump in me t'roat when Mickey Mulligan proposed. I never felt so happy in me life.

Liz—And yer felt happy wid a lump in yer t'roat?

Sue—Sure! It was a lump of ice cream.

◆

Mrs. Flint—I see that some sociologists have reached the conclusion that bachelors are criminals.

Mr. Flint—Yes, that's what makes them so fascinating to some of you.

◆

Felt Safe.

Parson—Deacon, it worries me to see you go to sleep in church.

Deacon—Don't let it worry you. I'm always careful to leave my pocketbook at home.

DOCTOR RENHART'S WIFE;

or

THE FATAL HONEYMOON.

By J. M. MERRILL, author of "Birdella," "Marching Through Dixie," "Blackade," etc.

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CHAPTER XV.

A fortnight after the incidents related in the last chapter, Demonia was able to be up and walk around. The incident of the poisoned cat had proved a shock which rather helped than retarded her recovery.

She read Eulene aright after that day.

Captain Axby was now very attentive. Harmonia, feeling it safe to leave her sister, had departed for home and business, which she feared had suffered during her absence.

"I shall soon be able to return home," said Demonia, while sitting with Mrs. Lowndes on the farmer's porch. "You have been very kind to me, Mrs. Lowndes—I owe my life to you."

Demonia was not very much changed. Her freckles were a trifle subdued, and her dark Titian hair seemed of deeper tint. Her voice was strong and pleasant as of old. There was a pallor in cheek and brow not there before that almost fatal accident, this was all. The girl looked almost pretty in her white, fleecy gown with a sprig of arbutus at the corsage and throat.

"A reg'lar little farmer gal," the good housewife had remarked.

"Say nothing, please, about it," returned Mrs. Lowndes. "It was all Tom's doings."

"Tom. And where is he? I should like to thank him in person before I go."

"He is not in the neighborhood at present."

"Noble fellow! You ought to feel proud, Mrs. Lowndes, of such a brother."

"I should say I had!" with a sudden burst of enthusiasm. "He once saved me from a danger more awful than the one you escaped. I was on the point of falling into the pit of darkness when he came to the rescue. It cost him a lifetime of happiness, too. Tom is not the man he once was, Miss Peprys."

"No?"

"He was brave and handsome, with every prospect of making a name for himself, and the happiest lord in all creation. I blasted his hopes forever."

"You? Impossible?"

The shadows of some unforgotten sorrow darkened the face of the nurse.

Demonia felt the shadow more than she saw it. Mrs. Lowndes was often under the shadow, and it puzzled the girl to account for it.

"Won't you tell me about it?" she asked.

"It can do no good. You have had sorrow enough. You came a long way to view the grave of a friend. You have had your sorrow as well. Tell me of it and then I will reciprocate. Let us be frank with one another, Demonia."

The voice of the speaker was low and musical. Demonia looked quickly into the kindly eyes, her whole heart going out to this intellectual woman, with a past.

"It's a bargain!" exclaimed Demonia."

And then she opened her heart in a way that she had at one time never dreamed of doing. She found in her companion a good listener. She spared herself nothing. And she praised Doctor Renhart to the skies. When she had finished the tears were standing in the eyes of her listener.

"Demonia Peprys, you did love the doctor, after all."

The words burst from the lips of Mrs. Lowndes as if in relief.

"Yes, I did love him," murmured Demonia.

"And now?"

"And now, I ought to hate him!" exclaimed the wronged wife.

"No, no, you must not say that. You do not know. What if he, your husband, had good and sufficient reason for his course—"

"Mrs. Lowndes, there could not be sufficient reason."

"You are a just judge no doubt," sighed the other.

The nurse dried her eyes and rose to her feet. She took a few turns across the porch then resumed her seat.

"Demonia, won't you spare me?"

"Spare you——"

"From the telling of my story?"

"I would rather not. But if——"

"It matters little after all," broke in the woman. "I once had a husband. I thought I loved him till he drove me to distraction by committing a crime, no less than robbing his employer of a large sum. Our family name has never been tarnished. Brother Tom and I wished to keep this from the public. Tom did everything in reason—repaid to the last cent the embezzled money."

"It seems to me that should have satisfied the employer. As for the public, that was safe, providing this man was truly repentant," said Demonia.

"He seemed to be all that, Demonia. I took him back, shielded him with my love."

"Yes, yes——"

"And all went well till in an evil hour a man, a devil in human form, tempted him and he fell once more. Wild with fear, I sent again for Tom."

"I can understand all you felt, Mrs. Lowndes," sympathized Demonia.

"I believe you can. Tom came, but too late to save that awful man. The exposure came, and, and Daniel Lowndes fell by his own hand!"

The speaker halted lamely, tears falling fast.

Demonia waited long, but her companion did not resume her talk.

"It was very sad," finally articulated the sympathetic girl. "It does seem that the men are all more or less wicked."

"No, there are exceptions," said Mrs. Lowndes, quickly.

"I know of none."

"There is Tom."

"He seems all that a man should be," admitted Demonia.

"And he is all that. I should have died long ago but for my brother. He is at present my only stay."

"He may have a past——"

"Don't!" exclaimed the other. "I have built my hopes of Heaven on Tom."

"And if he fails——"

"He cannot, he must not fail."

"It doesn't seem that he will, and yet we cannot tell. Look at the man I trusted; and at your husband——"

A sob from Mrs. Lowndes cut her short.

"My dear Mrs. Lowndes, forgive me!" exclaimed Demonia. Her heart was touched. She placed a loving arm about the woman who had been her good friend and kissed her tear-wet cheek. "Forgive me. I'll never slander good old Tim again, never."

The two women mingled their tears, and thus Captain Axby found them when he drove to the farm in a smart rig from a nearby ranch. He had come for Demonia, and urged by Mrs. Lowndes, she consented to ride with him.

The gallant captain was himself again. He may have been haunted for a day over the sin of hurling Eulene to her death, but that was now all gone. He would delay no longer his siege to the heart of the recovered widow.

At the bridge spanning the gulf the horses took fright and dashed toward the gulch. A rein broke. Captain Axby snatched Demonia to his breast and made a leap for life. The horses went into the gulch. On the brink two human souls were flung, trembling on the edge of eternity. Neither was injured.

It was a merciful providence that had saved them. And this was not a played game with Captain Axby as had been that of the outlaws of Tiger mountain. Providence had tossed a point to his hand and the captain worked it to the limit.

"What an escape," he said, breathing hard.

"Yes, indeed!"

He still held her close as if he feared losing her. He drew her aside, beyond the menace of the gulch. His eyes looked into hers in a way that revealed what was coming. Demonia did not shrink from him. He seemed so kind and brave.

"Demonia, I love you. Will you be my wife?"

The declaration had come at last. Demonia was not surprised. She had expected this before now.

A man, walking the road beyond the bridge caught sight of the two. He seemed to recognize them since he halted and watched the twain as if bound by a spell. When they began to speak he pressed on.

Demonia struggled to release herself. The doughty captain held her fast.

"You are mine, dearest. I read your answer in your eyes." He kissed her again. The onlooker scowled and clinched his hands as if in anger.

For a few brief minutes, Demonia fell under the magnetism of his presence. She knew her own heart too well to acknowledge a new allegience. Pushing him forcibly from her, she drew back, her face lit with a sudden deep emotion.

"You saved my life, Captain Axby," she said, shrilly. "I thank you for it, but I will not marry you."

"But, Demonia, darling——"

"Please don't."

She drew away from him shuddering. Something forbade her trusting to herself while this man regarded her with his handsome eyes. He forced her to look at him, however. He snatched and held her two hands fast.

"I'm not to be balked," he said masterfully. "I know you love me——"

"No, Captain Axby, I do not love you," said Demonia, with whitened cheeks and burning eyes. "You ask why? I will tell you. My heart lies buried in that mountain grave at Tiger City. I shall never marry—"

"But, Demonia, think what this implies. That dead scoundrel was not your husband. He had a wife living when he married you. He——"

"Cease!" interrupted she. "My heart is with him. He did deceive me sorely, yet I love him still—my poor, dead Doctor Rolfe!"

Demonia covered her face and sobbed aloud. Captain Axby seizer her arm, uttering an oath. He got no further. A bunch of clinched digits went out and the doughty captain fell senseless at the feet of weeping Demonia.

Another moment and she lay swooning on the breast of Tom Burling.

CHAPTER XVI.

Demonia, very much refreshed, and happier than she had been since that night when her lover husband deserted her so strangely, walked and talked with Mrs. Lowndes for the last time ere taking her departure for her Eastern home.

The two had gone over their experiences together, and were on the most friendly terms. The woman of Tiger City had promised to visit Demonia, sometime in her Eastern home. Tom, the eccentric, had not shown himself since the day he had knocked down Captain Axby.

Demonia had swooned on the breast of the brave mountaineer. He had carried her to a brook, revived her and led her back to Hull house. She had been at the time, too dazed to quite comprehed it all. She only knew that she despised Captain Axby, and warmed very much toward Mrs. Lowndes' brother.

"I cannot go without seeing Mr. Burling," said Demonia.

"You must not. Tom thinks so much of you, Demonia."

The girl blushed and looked aside.

Tom had been in her thoughts very much of the time, lately. Captain Axby had not again annoyed her. She was quite sure she should not care to see him again. Mrs. Lowndes then confided to her the fact that the captain was considered a base adventurer by her brother.

While the two were talking, a woman broke from the cover of a clump of trees and approached them. Both started on recognizing the woman who had claimed to be the widow of the murdered man at Tiger City. She was thin and haggard now. She carried one arm in a sling. Her thin, dark face was scarred by some recent accident.

Both Demonia and her companion thought of that almost fatal dose of poison, consequently did not greet the broken creature with cordiality.

"I am so glad you are alive," said Eulene, as she regarded Demonia.

"It is not your good will that saved her," returned Mrs. Lowndes, her kindly face darkening.

"No. How did she escape that dose I administered? Don't stare and draw away from me, Mrs. Lowndes. I am an assassin at heart. I hated her because—because I thought she lured my husband from me. I am ready to die when I am revenged on him." The creature spoke rapidly, with hot eyes and bitter tongue. Demonia felt pity. Perhaps the woman was mad.

"It is too late——"

"What is too late?" sharply.

"To avenge yourself on a man who is dead," said Mrs. Lowndes.

"Ah, but there's where you are all deceived."

"What do you mean?" Demonia turned almost fiercely upon the thin, wretched creature, with a pale and startled look.

"Doctor Renhart——"

"Is dead, no doubt, but it seems he wasn't my husband!"

"Not your husband? Then you lied to me!"

"I did, but not intentionally. The man I married was handsome; he had the tongue of an angel. He wooed and won me. Since then he has tried to kill me. He would wed you, Demonia, because you have money. The man I married, providing it was not a false ceremony, posed as Dr. Rolfe Renhart. He is coming now. Let me hide from him for a minute. He thinks I am dead. He flung me into the gulch yonder, and I have lain in a crippled state for many days."

All saw a gentleman walking swiftly down the road from the direction of the Hull farm. It proved to be Captain Axby. His moustache was lately waxed. His white hands, as he pulled his kids, resembled those of a ballroom beauty. He approached smiling, and as "cute" as he had been before his fall under the fist of indignant Tom Burling.

"I have been hunting for you everywhere, Miss Peprys," said the captain. "I understand that you are about to return to your distant home."

"Yes," assented Demonia, coldly.

"How fortunate that we are to take the same train which goes within the hour. I have a rig at the gate and will——"

"Thanks, but I have other escort," said Demonia, with some of her old spirit. "If you really must have a companion, suppose you take your wife."

Demonia stepped aside and Eulene confronted the doughty captain.

The two women scanned the startled captain's face. He grew a shade paler. No doubt the reappearance of one he supposed dead at the bottom of the gulf startled him deeply. He was quick, however, to gather his presence of mind.

The scheming scoundrel had been too long the wearer of a mask to feel very much discomposed at anything.

"You are pleased to joke," said he, casting one contemptuous glance at the dark-faced Eulene. "I have no wife——"

"You lie in your head, Doctor Renhart!"

He laughed at the hot words of the wronged girl.

"You can see," he said, "how mad this poor creature is. She imagines I am the man who has been dead a month."

"Dare you deny that I am your wife?"

Eulene approached and peered into the face of the man with a look so diabolical as to rend Demonia with a shudder.

"As Doctor Renhart, you married me. I have the evidence and shall produce it at the proper time," went on the half mad girl.

"I am not responsible for the misdeeds of that man," sneered the captain. "He seems to have been a first class villain. No doubt he pretended to make you his wife I understand that he was a much married man."

"That is a lie!"

From the rear came a stinging outburst. Turning, Demonia beheld tall, Tom Burling, striding toward them. She had to gaze twice ere she was sure of her premises. There had been wrought a wonderful change. The red beard had been reaped away, the hair was brushed back till the whole contour of the face was visible—handsome still, despite that ugly, livid scar.

"Darke Devlin, alias Captain Axby, you are at the end of your tether!"

The newcomer uttered a sharp whistle. Four men sprang from the trees and approached. The captain attempted to flee. He was too late. Soon he was borne raving from the spot.

"I have run that man down at last," said Tom Burling. "He has posed in a dozen different lines; he is a scoundrel of the first water. I do not doubt this poor girl's story. Devlin has made me trouble enough. It was he who murdered a man at Tiger Mountain, or at least one of his tools did, disfiguring his countenance and naming the dead Doctor Renhart. I believe it was he also, who flung the bomb that disfigured me for life, and afterward tried his best to steal a fortune by seeking marriage with my supposed widow."

The speaker turned now and faced Demonia. She had been watching him with blanched cheeks and a smothered feeling at heart. That face! It had haunted her for weeks! That voice! Nowhere in all America could there be another like it. Demonia was atremble with hope and fear.

The look on the face of Mountain Tom was hard to decipher. Hope and love, fear and despair mingled. There was an appeal in the handsome eyes that could not be denied. Demonia tottered. Tall Tom opened his arms. Another instant and Demonia fell weeping upon his breast.

Rising from his embrace, she pushed herself free and faced this man, her white and agitated face streaming tears.

"Rolfe! Rolfe! my own Doctor Rolfe!" she cried in an ecstacy of joy.

"My precious Demon!"

They found themselves alone after they had returned to solid earth.

"What a fool I have been not to know you all this time. Your beard, [illegible]"

"And this horrible scar," he said with an effort. "I knew how it would be. I had nothing but my good looks to recommend me to you, Demon. After that was gone I had not the courage to face you again."

"You poor, silly boy."

"Are you trusting me now, Demon?"

"Trusting you forever and a day, Rolfe."

His face disfigured though it was, looked absolutely handsome. He held her very close and kissed her many times. At length he said:

"Sister Midget told you all about it, did she not?"

"Not quite. She did not tell me that you were Doctor Rolfe."

"And did you not suspect, my own?"

"Sometimes I did, but that grave on the mountain stood ever between," said Demonia, sadly.

"That barrier was not of my making, Demon."

"I believe you, Rolfe."

"That night at Swampland, at Aunt William's, I got a hasty telegram from Midget summoning me to her. The man she called husband had suddenly become a criminal, and was about to be exposed. To sister, it was agony. Our family would be disgraced and you alienated. I rushed to the rescue at once, leaving word with Captain Axby to explain my absence. I did not know him then. Since I have unearthed his criminal career. Briefly stated I went to Tiger City. I got there too late. Dan Lowndes was dead and the whole shameful story known. I stood by my sister in her trouble. This would be a fine story for the ears of my young wife! I shrank from going to you with it, but should have done so had not that accident disfigured me for life. I hadn't the courage to face you then, after all the happiness of that fatal honeymoon."

"You silly boy."

"Worse than silly, perhaps. But yon cannot understand. Even now——"

"Hush, Rolfe."

"Your coming on to see my body, to weep over my grave, that touched my heart and soul, Demonia. It was a sweet sadness that I enjoyed in bitter secret. You remember I recognized you in the depot——

"Yes, yes, I remember. Poor Rolfe! But it is all over now. We will be happy in spite of everything." She gazed at him with adoring eyes.

"Dare you take me back with all my ugliness, Demon?"

"That makes us even, Rolfe. You forget my freckles and red hair. Let my homely face offset your scars."

He almost crushed her in his arms, and kissed the red hair and freckled, little nose, the thin cheeks; lastly on the mouth. Two hearts beat very close. And then——

"It shall be as you say, Demonia, darling. We will this day begin another honeymoon that shall eclipse the first as the sun is greater than the earth. Shall it not be so, dearest?"

"Yes, oh, yes!"

The two walked hand in hand from the spot, flushed and happy as two young lovers.

The end

Selling the Butcher.

A Kensington butcher exhibited at his shop door various articles, such as sheep's heads, bullocks' tongues, etc.

Two thieves in search of their dinner noticed the conspicuous and tempting tongues at the butcher's shop, and they resolved to victimize him.

Accordingly, one of the thieves made a rush into the shop, and, hastily addressing the butcher, said:

"Did you see a big black dog running away with a large tongue in its mouth?"

"Impossible!" said the unsuspecting bitcher, who fancied one of his tongues was off, and, seizing a chopper, he rushed out of the shop after the supposed dog-thief. Getting a glimpse of one of the canine race somewhat answering the description given, he made full chase, but lost sight of the animal at a corner, where a crowd of hangerson are always to be found loitering.

The butcher, somewhat discomfited, appealed to the crowd by asking if any of them had "seen a big black dog with a tongue in its mouth."

"With a tongue in its mouth?" said one of the crowd. "You stupid man! Did you ever see a black dog without a tongue in its mouth?"

"I am sold!" said the worthy butcher; and so he was, for when he returned to the shop he found that the whole of his tongues were gone, as well as the two thieves, who had taken them.

Did Well.

"Charlie promised that on the day he married me he would stop drinking."

"Did he keep his promise?"

"Oh, yes. He didn't take a drink all that day!"

The woman who says that all men are alike probably has had an experience she would like to forget.

THE OLD PLACES.

BY WILL F. GRIFFIN

Say, how would you like to go with me
  Away from the greed and spoiling,
To a place where I know the fields stretch green
  And there's naught of strife and toiling?
And how would you like to forget the noise
  And these haunted city f[illegible]
And bury them deep in the dreams we'd have
  In the good old boy-time places?

Say, how would you like to go with me
  To the willow's friendly cover,
Down to the river where, long ago,
  The pickerel used to hover?
And how would you like t[illegible]
  As we did with sunburn[illegible]
And bare, brown feet and [illegible]
  In the good old boy-time places?

Say, how would you like to go with me
  And forget your tribulations
In the romp and rove and heedless [illegible]
  We knew in our school vacat[illegible]
And how would it be to find th[illegible]
  The one where the old mill-ra[illegible]
And dive in its waters cool and d[illegible]
  One of those old boy-time places?

LOST IN THE KICKAPOO WOODS.

A TRUE STORY.

BY M. M. DEE.

"Oh, pshaw," I said with contempt, laying down my paper to polish my g[illegible], "I don't believe a word of that."

"What, grandpa?" inquired Myrtle looking up from her book with the usual inquisitiveness of ten.

"Why this piece," explained I, "was about a man going crazy, by being without anything to eat for five days. Now I went three, without a morsel of food, and was no nearer insane than I am at this minute."

"Oh, did you, really, grandpa? When was it?" "Please tell me all about it," cried Myrtle, eager for a story.

I knew there would be no more reading until the story was told, so I might as well begin at once. "Let me see, it must have been nearly fifty years ago, that two nephews and myself went out for a hunt in Northern Wisconsin.

"That section of unbroken forest between the Mississippi and Wisconsin Rivers, was known as the Kickapoo woods, and was about sixty miles in length.

"We reached the edge of this forest late one evening and camped. I was hungry for venison, so as soon as it was daylight, I took my rifle and started out in my shirt-sleeves to kill a deer before breakfast. I was not long in securing a shot at a fine buck and wounded it, so that I expected to find it dead any minute; but I followed it for perhaps half an hour, without success so I decided to return to camp for breakfast. For some time I retraced my steps, looking for a familiar opening to guide me, I was not long in realizing that I was lost

"I was not frightened by my discovery but provoked at myself for being so careless as to start out on such a morning without a compass. I expected the sun to come out soon, and was confident of finding my way out, if able to tell the directions.

"But as the day advanced, it became darker instead of lighter, and began to rain. I soon became drenched without my coat, and very uncomfortable, of course, but for a while was too preoccupied in trying to find some eminence from which I could take my bearings, to think of my appetite.

"All that day I wandered about without seeing any game, and toward evening concluded to build a fire, to make me more comfortable and keep wild animals away.

"Matches were not so plentiful then as now, consequently I carried none; but usually made a fire by 'shooting a wad' as we called it. I collected some dry twigs and leaves, then cut underbrush from the large pines, with my hunting knife, and filling my gun barrel loosely with tow, I fired at my kindling pile. It failed to burn, and instead of shooting another wad, as I ought to have done, I picked up the smoking tow, and began sprinkling it liberally with powder from the horn at my side. When lo! and behold, there was an explosion, and the splintered fragments of my powder-horn, fell from my blackened hands to the ground.

"I remember just what I said as I realized my desperate condition

"What was it, grandpa?" came in breathless accents from Myrtle.

"Well, I asserted quite emphatically, that it was was a pity it had not blown my head off. If it had not been for the crook of the horn turning out from my side, it probably would have killed me, or blown my arm off, anyway. Some of the splinters struck me in the face, for when I tried to blow the still smoking wad of tow, I blew a mouth full of blood on it, that put out the last spark. I did not know my face had received any injury until then, though both my hands were badly burned.

"I was in no enviable frame of mind. Picking up my useless gun, I started off in such anger and haste, that I left my hunting-knife. My hands did not blister so badly, but seemed to be just scorched all over the insides, and the intolerable burning nearly drove me frantic, for awhile, eliminating all thoughts of hunger.

"Presently I came to a realizing sense of my situation, and began to calculate my chances with any wild beasts that might, thinking I had only my knife to defend myself with; but when I felt for that, it was gone. Well, I can assure you that was just about the last straw to the camel's back; and I sat down at the foot of a large pine in utter despair.

"There in the heart of that gloomy, though majestic forest, with the sullen drop, drop, of the rain, not making music on the roof like I love so dear to hear, but pelting me on my unprotected shoulders.

"The cool rain-drops soothed the burning of my hands, at least I should have been grateful for that.

"The howling of the wolves in the distance, aroused me to action once more.

"After looking around for a tree small enough to climb, I finally found one, but near it was a log that had rotted out like a trough; that would make a more comfortable bed, and if necessary I could climb the tree, later. I pulled some ferns for my bed, and tipping the log up on its edge, lay down beside it, and let it drop over me, just leaving my nose near enough to the end for air

My throbbing, burning hands kept me awake for several hours, but at last, tired Nature succumbed, and I fell asleep and did not awaken until morning.

"It was still raining when I crawled out of my queer bed, and it looked strange to see the stream rising, like it does where a [illegible] has been sleeping

Oh, but I was hungry, it seemed like cold potatoes, which I detested, would be a delicacy. The gnawing of my empty stomach tortured me almost as much as the burning of my hands, had the nig[illegible] my mind was perfectly clear, [illegible] out with renewed determination to find my way out. After several hours of hard walking, I came upon the scene of my [illegible] the previous evening, thus proving I traveled in a [illegible]

"I found my hunting-knife, then felt a little better. After a few moments thought, I decided upon a plan to keep from walking in a circle. Selecting a tree straight ahead, upon reaching it, I gave it a slash with my hunting-knife, then selected another. In keeping my mind occupied, the craving for food was almost forgotten, at least part of the time.

The steady tramp, tramp, of my own feet and the sullen drop, drop, of the rain, were the only sounds that broke the stillness of that great dismal forest, all the liv[illegible] d[illegible] even a bird or a squirrel did I see.

"Finally the longest day of my life came to a close, with me still an exile from civilization.

"In searching for some shelter in which to spend the night, I discovered a little cave, recently occupied by bears, which looked so sung and comfortable, that I thought I would take my chances, if the former inhabitants should return to dispute my ownership. Grasping my knife ready for instnat use, I watched for an hour or more, then tired nature succumbed, and I slept as soundly as if in my own bed at home.

"When awakened, I could hardly believe my eyes, but rubbed them again to [illegible]tain I was awake. Yes, indeed, it was true, for a bright shaft of sunlight illuminated the whole interior of the bear's den.

"I shouted joyfully, for the sun was shining brightly, and that meant I was no longer lost

Hastily I began taking my bearings, and found to my surprise, that I had been traveling due North, instead of South.

The pangs of hunger urged me to walk as I never walked before, but despite my greatest exertion it was past noon when I reached the edge of the Kickapoo woods and looked down on the little logging camp fully fifteen miles from the point where I entered the forest. It was hardly possible to realize I could have wandered so far.

"I reached the nearest house about three o'clock, and asked the woman if she had anything in the house to eat, intimating that I was a little the hungriest man she ever met.

'Oh,' she replied, with surprise, 'then you are the man that has been lost

I assured her that I was that very individual, and you ought to have seen her hustle to get me something to eat. She had not a morsel of bread in the house, but plenty of meat and cold potatoes, which by the way, tasted better than I ever imagined they could. She was not many minutes in mixing up some pan-cakes, to which I did ample justice. That generous meal certainly would have killed me, if I had not started on horse-back for our camp immediately.

The woman loaned me the horse, said her husband could ride home. She told me that every man in the settlement but one, who was sick, was out hunting for me

"The roads were bad and so it took me until night to reach my destination. The men who had been out hunting for me all day were rolled up in their blankets, and completely filled the cabin, so that some had to get up before I could open the door.

"At the first sound of my voice, there was a joyful shouting of 'Uncle Will, Uncle Will,' as my nephews, ahead of the others came tumbling out of their beds to welcome me, and hear my story.

"After their curiosity had been satisfied, supper was awaiting me, which I disposed of, and felt no bad effects.

By this time the owner of the cabin made a proposition to the men. There he was living in a little, old cabin of two rooms, when he had the logs hewn for more than a year, waiting to get men enough to raise his double log house.

Now he proposed as we were all together, to stay next day and put up his house.

"All agreed to this plan; and we could hear the man's wife up all night, baking pies and cakes, and dressing chickens for our breakfast and dinner.

"Well, we put them up a big, double, two-story house, and being at an important point, was used as a hotel for many years. It was so substantial, that I presume it is standing to this day, unless it has been destroyed by fire.

It's an ill wind that blows nobody good," [illegible] man always declared, he would have had to wait, perhaps years before geting men enough together to raise his house, if I had not been so accomodating as to get lost.

His Excuse.

"Tommy, you were not at school yesterday. Why was that?" asked teacher.

"I was sick, ma'am," answered Tommy.

"I am sorry to hear it. What was the trouble?"

"I had a awful sore thumb."

"That is too bad. What caused it?

I—I stepped on a rusty nail, ma'am."

Then the teacher knew that Tommy had played hookey and gone to the ball game.

Nothing pleases the modest man more than to be detected in the act of doing a good deed.

OUTDOOR LIFE

Will Not Offset the Ill Effects of Coffee When One Cannot Digest It.

A farmer says

"It was not from liquor or tobacco that for ten years or more I suffered from dyspepsia and stomach trouble, they were caused by the use of coffee until I got so bad I had to give up coffee entirely and almost give up eating. There were times when I could eat only boiled milk and bread and when I went to the field to work I had to take some bread and butter along to give me strength

"I doctored with doctors and took [illegible] everything I could get for my sto[illegible] the way of medicine but if I got [illegible] it only lasted a little while until I was almost a walking skeleton.

"One day I read an ad for Postum and told my wife I would try it, and as to the following facts I will make affidavit before any judge

"I quit coffee entirely and used Postum in its place. I have regained my health entirely and can eat anything that is cooked to eat. I have increased in weight until now I weigh more than I ever did. I have not taken any medicine for my stomach since I began using Postum. Why, I b[illegible] Postum will almost digest an iron wedge.

"My family would stick to coffee at first but they saw the effects it had on me and when they were feeling bad they began to use Postum, one at a time, until now we all use Postum." Name given by Postum Co., [illegible]

[illegible] al of Postum in place of coffee [illegible] truth, an easy and pleasant way. [illegible]

Look in pkgs. for a copy of the famous little book, "The Road to Wellville."

A Disclaimer.

Rat-tat-tat!

The old soldier stood on the doorstep and listened.

"Wash[illegible]," he muttered; "no luck here, that's [illegible] sure."

"I suppose it's only another bothering beggar drat 'em" muttered the sharp-f[illegible] woman within, as she [illegible] [illegible]tched her hands from the [illegible] wash-tub and marched grimly fo[illegible] [illegible] disturber of washing-day's [illegible] and ceremonies.

[illegible] muttered the ancient hero. "I've lost my l[illegible]"

"W[illegible], I ain't got it!" snapped the woman [illegible]

And the door closed with an awful bang.

Every Lady Read This.

Years ago when I was a sufferer, an old nurse [illegible] of a wonderful cure for Leucorrhoea, Displa[illegible] Periods, Uterine and Ovarian troubles. It cured [illegible] month. It is a simple, harmless lotion that can be [illegible] by any one having the recipe. I will send it free to every suffering sister who writes to me. Address M[illegible] A. Hadnot South Bend, Indiana

High License.

"I," thundered the tall man with the white necktie, "am in favor of the $1,000 license."

"So am I," ventured the meek little man in the rear. "When it comes to marriage licenses."

"Marriage licenses? Why, sir, I am speaking of saloon licenses!"

"That may be, but I am speaking of marriage licenses. If it had been necessary for me to raise a thousand dollars to get married I would not be the henpecked individual I am now."

And from somewhere in the distance could be heard the stentorian voice of a buxom matron calling Henry home to wash the dishes

Ladies, Preserve Your Youthful Appearance.

Madame Mignette's Beauty Cream and Skin Food removes every defect, spot, freckle, pimple, blemish or wrinkle, leaving the skin soft, clear and smooth. It is perfectly harmless and will not injure the most delicate skin. It preserves and brings back the youthful glow to the face and ruddiness to the cheeks, preserving it in this condition until extreme old age. This preparation has been used for years and hundreds are now using it and are more than delighted with the results.

Send ten (10) cents for formula which you can have filled at any drug store at a very small cost. Do not delay, but write at once. Box 491, Blairsville, P[illegible]

Born for It.

Jinks—Have you selected a trade or profession for your boy?

Winks—I shall make a plumber of him.

Jinks—Has he a bent that way?

Winks—He's born for it. Tell him to do a thing immediately and he won't think of it again for a week.

A Dainty Little Maid.

Everyone ought to have her. She is dressed in pretty colors and changes the color of her skirt herself when it is going to rain. She indicates when it is wise to take an umbrella or when you can do without. She is the simplest and best of barometers. She is an ornament, a good seller for agents, a pretty gift, a good business souvenir and useful to anyone. She or one of her sisters comes postpaid with full directions for only 10 cents. W. P. Randolph & Co., 78 Dearborn St., Chicago.

Wouldn't Believe It.

"Yer look bad, Jim. Been laid up?"

"Sorter. Today's the first time I've been out er doors in three months."

"What was the matter with you?"

"Nothin'; but the judge wouldn't believe it."

BOYS' AND GIRLS' CORNER

...BY...
MARO O. ROLFE.

LURA OF SOUTH DAKOTA

...OR...
THE YOUNG PRAIRIE RANGERS.

[Copyright by W. D. Boyce Co.]

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CHAPTER IX.

BUD MANTON TO THE TRAIL.

Next day, Charley Bighatchet was stopped on the trail by a man, old and decrepit, if appearances went for anything, who entrusted to him a note for "Colonel Calderon."

"He was lately at Deadwood," said the seeming, old man. "If he has left there, find some means to send this after him. It is very important and more important to him than anyone else."

The halfbreed eyed this person suspiciously, but accepted the note and rode off, leaving him standing by the trail. It was not long before, in the course of events, the missive found its way into the hands of Noxon Norman. It was couched in the following words:

"The young woman, Lura Lane, a school teacher at the Roorback school, undoubtedly is Lura Chon, heiress of Jean Chartroise, who was her great-grandfather. You will know if this means anything to you. She has no knowledge of her true identity. However, that can be proven by the girl's reputed parents, but by them only, with the help of Rastus Roorback and his wife Emmeny. If this interests you, you will doubtless want to cultivate the good-will of the Roorbacks, and some generous act of yours for their benefit might tend to that end. They are well-meaning people to whom fortune has been niggardly and they would appreciate a true friend."

An hour after this letter was entrusted to Bighatchet, Stanley Dill arrived at the rangers' headquarters, and handing Ned Stearns a big, loose coat, a gray wig and a battered hat, said with a laugh of self-satisfaction:

"You're safe to withdraw that guard from Roorback's ranch. I'll go you a good bet that Norman will not molest either Rastus or his wife, but in the morning we'd do well to go down to the school house and fix up some arrangements with the girl for her safety."

They were too late. They found the pupils in a state of excitement. The teacher had not appeared there. One of the big boys had gone to the Roorback's to inquire concerning her and had been told by Emmeny that she had departed for school that morning at the usual time. Soon after Ned Stearns and Dill got to the school house, Rastus came, his clumsy horse a-lather because of the speed at which it had been urged along the trail, and he corroborated the statement that his wife had made to the boy. None of the scholars had seen anyone except others of their number, on the trail that morning. Lura had disappeared and, as Rastus asserted, there was "as much mystery about her vanishin' as if the ground had opened and swallered her up" or she had "been translated to the sky."

"Would she have gone away of her own accord?" asked Dill, curiously, looking thoughtfully into Ned Stearns' face.

"Once, when she was greatly worried, she suggested that she might sometime do so," replied Ned, "but I showed her how easily Norman could trace her to some other place, and under promise of protection from the rangers she gave me to understand that she would not take such a step. She must have left some sign, and if there is a man in South Dakota who can find it it is Bud Manton, of my company. I will send for him."

Bud found Lura's footprints before the ranch house of the Roorback's and trailed her half way to the school. On the roadway, in a belt of timber, he found other tracks leading to the center of the road from the right and from the left. Where these tracks met, the girl's trail ended, but there were evidences of a struggle on that spot.

"She has been captured by two men," Bud reported. "They carried her to the underbrush beside the trail. From that point, it will be necessary only to follow the tracks of three horses, and those tracks are so plain that there ought to be little trouble about that."

"Go ahead," was Ned's answer, "and we will follow."

The trail of the three horses led off to the south. For an hour the trio traveled on it without having to trouble themselves greatly to keep it in view. Then it was lost in a wide and shallow stream. On the further shore it was not found.

Bud concluded that the three horses had been ridden in the water some distance down-stream, with a view to making further pursuit impossible, and he believed that by the expenditure of a little time and patience he would be able to discover where the fugitives had made land again. Ned remembered having told Norman of Manton's skill as a trailer.

The three men rode up and down both shores of the stream, searching diligently for the lost trail, but found it not. Night came on and they had to abandon the task until daylight. They camped beside the stream. That night a hard rain beat down with heavy impact upon the earth, swelling the soil and obliterating every trail that had been made since the last preceding storm. Bud was disgusted. A half day and a night had been used up to no purpose, and time was valuable.

Drenched, tired, disheartened, but not yet desperate, the defeated trio made their way back to the headquarters of the prairie rangers. There, Rastus and Emmeny Roorback were awaiting their coming. Beckoning Dill to follow, Ned called them aside.

"We got tired o' waitin' at home and so rid over here," Roorback explained. "We was so awful anxious about Lu'a! That man Norman is anxious too, I reckon. Leastways he come to our house this mornin' and asked all kinds o' questions about 'er an' said he was sorry for threat'nin' us as he did and would——"

"Yes," interrupted Emmeny, "he said he would do anything on 'arth that could be done for her or for us."

"He did, eh?" remarked Dill, grimly.

Ned could have laughed at the woman's simplicity had he not been so worried. Dill's plan was evidently working out exactly as that shrewd schemer had predicted that it would, and he was now ready to advance it a step.

"I suppose you kept your promise not to tell Norman about Lura's parentage," said Dill.

"We did, sart'in!" exclaimed Emmeny, and Rastus bowed.

"He will call on you soon again, I think. If he does, it will be well for you if you tell him that she is Miss Chon," Dill went on. "Understand, I want you to talk to him a good deal about what you could do in the way of proving that she is Lura Chon, if she were restored to you alive and well, but you are to give him no actual proofs till you have the girl again and know that she is all right."

"It is very important that you remember and follow that advice," put in Ned Stearns. "Thus you may be able not only to protect yourselves, but to help Lura, also."

"I see the drift of it all," Rastus assured them. "Now, Emmeny, that feller Norman's a human serpent, and you're not goin' to let 'im beguile ye. He's a livin' an' walkin' lie, and yer not to b'lieve him at any stage!"

"I won't," promised Emmeny. "Now I want to shake hands with Doctor Thaddeus Tucker, that snatched me right out o' the shadder of the deadly weepin-wiher tree, then we'll go home to wait for that inhuman annercondor."

When the Roorback's had gone, Ned called Bud Manton into the council. When the latter learned that Noxon Norman had been to the ranchman's that very morning, he expressed great satisfaction.

"That gives me the chance I want," he said. "There is no doubt that Norman was one of Lura's captors. Anyway, he was the instigator of the outrage and will go where she is. There I will make it my business to trail him. When I have located the young lady, I will come back and tell you where she is, and then you can plan according to circumstances."

"And as long as he is busy about Lura, Norman is not likely to carry into effect any of his threats against the ranchmen and mine owners," said Ned. "I argue that his interest now lies in doing both sets of claimants out of the land and getting it all as the husband of the heiress of Jean Chartroise."

"Well put, Ned. That is precisely what he has set out to do. He has had reason to believe that Lura Lane was Miss Chon, but until now he has not thought that he could absolutely prove her identity. First, he wants to possess himself of Miss Chon, in order to corner all the chances in the game. Now he believes that with her as his wife, he'd have a sure thing. He'd throw the Chartroise interest whenever he saw it profitable to do it. He would take all the tricks and sweep in all the winnings. It was in the interest of the syndicate, not in his personal interest, that he began menacing in this section. If he can marry Miss Chon, he will deal with the Chartroise syndicate first and with them afterward. Meanwhile, Miss Chon, or Lura Lane, is the only one in present peril."

Ned Stearns agreed with Dill in this view of the matter and was impelled by the strongest personal interest to rescue Lura from the distressing plight in which he believed she was. He approved of Bud Manton's plan to watch for Norman at Roorback's, and trail him thence to some place where the girl was held a prisoner as, logically, the first step to be taken. It was an eventful quest upon which Manton was to enter, but the Nebraskan had been born and reared on the frontier, had lived with red men, as with white men, was inured to peril and could go to the end of any trail that could be followed. Besides, Bud was incorruptibly honest, and that fact counted for much with Ned Stearns.

The events of the past few days had created conditions some of which had been predicted by Dill and the young captain of the prairie rangers and some of which could scarcely have been foreseen by anyone. The ranchmen and mine owners were not in present danger; but many of them had been threatened and none of them, except Roorback had been informed that immediate peril did not impend. Roorback had been too busy and too worried about Lura to tell many of the others how he had been favored by Norman's withdrawl of his threats.

The few to whom Roorback had spoken of the matter did not understand that the same influences that, directly, had impelled Norman to his thoughtfulness of Rastus and his interests had, indirectly, operated to afford them like immunity. Rastus, himself, was certain that the Ohioan had been actuated by self-interest only and considered that by the abduction of Lura, the chief of the claim-jumpers had erased from the ledger of humanity all credit that might have been due him for his change of front so far as the immediate carrying out of his threats was concerned.

To a man, the ranchmen and mine owners regarded Norman as an enemy that they ought to get rid of in the interest of self-preservation—as a snake that must be killed [illegible] and whereever he might thrust up his head. The spirit of these South Dakotans had blazed from the eyes of Rastus Roorback when he had threatened Norman with a swing at the end of a lariat from an overhanging branch of some convenient tree.

While danger to the claimants under government title was seemingly abating, danger to Noxon Norman was now simply a detestible claim-jumper, dangerous to property interests, but a consciousless invader of the home circle, who hesitated not at the kidnaping of a girl if he were enough infatuated with her to take the risk.

The risk was greater than he dreamed. He had overestimated his own strength or he had underestimated the forces arrayed against him. Perhaps he had done both; but no one but himself was responsible—he would get no mercy for any mere mistake that he might have made.

Others than Bud Manton were on the lookout for Norman, but the others did not know so well as the Nebraskan where he was likely to be at a given time. There was a stout, smooth, pliable lariat waiting for him. If he had not come early to Roorback's and gone away quickly, Manton might have been spared the trouble of trailing him!

CHAPTER X.

A TRICK AND ANOTHER ONE.

But Manton saw Norman come frowning, out of the ranch house. Part of what Rastus and Emmeny Roorback had said to the claim-jumper chieftain had not been what he had wanted to hear. They had assured him that they were able to positively establish the fact that the girl who supposed herself to be Lura Lane, was really Lura Chon, and then there had been a hitch.

"But give me the proofs, now," he urged.

"What's the use? The gal's lost or dead. If she was here, 'twould be different, I reckon," replied Rastus

"You let on to be a purty powerful man in these parts, Mr. Norman," said Emmeny. "Can't you find 'er an' bring 'er back to us?"

"It might be easier for me to get Miss Chon than Miss Lane," said Norman, pointedly. "If I had the proofs of her identity, perhaps I could arrange matters [illegible] you, as [illegible] would have [illegible]. If [illegible] Miss Chon she would be [illegible], would you not hasten to her rescue with the evidence that you are withholding?"

"If she is Miss Lane," was Roorback's uncompromising answer, "[illegible] to us and you don't want 'er [illegible]. If she is Miss Chon and you have [illegible] to her, you can git 'er easy without ask[illegible] of us. If you can bring back our niece to us and we can help you prove that she is a great heiress, we'll be awful glad to corporate with ye. I don't see as there's any reason for us to quarrel about it."

"Nor do I, my good friends," Norman said gurglingly and insincerely and with disappointment distorting every lineament of his face. "I shall exert all my influence for the girl's safety and happiness—trust me for that and hope for the best."

As Norman rode down the trail, the young Nebraskan followed him at a safe distance. This time there was to be no losing of the trail. It was not long before Norman left the main trail and went down a side trail that Manton knew penetrated the country to the southwest. In an hour, Norman took another trail that branched off from this one, and as Bud came to it and saw what the chief of the claim-jumpers had done, he whistled along and for a moment he feared too loudly but beyond drawing a response from some bird at the trailside the westerner's clear note produced no effect.

"He has taken the road to the Bad Lands!" exclaimed Manton. "Now I know I am in for a long ride—yes, a long ride and a hard one!"

His horse went on, almost in the tracks of Norman's. Bud was obliged to proceed carefully. He did not know how close he was to the man he pursued. If for any reason Norman should stop, an unpleasant encounter might ensue—an encounter that might spoil all the trailer's plans. From time to time, Manton drew rein and listened, but no sound made by the man he followed came back to him.

After a time, the trail dropped to the level of the low banks of a little stream that shimmered in the sunlight that was sifted down on its bosom through branches of overhanging trees. There were oaks and maples and pines; there were alders and sumachs and thorns. Rabbits ran to cover out of their shadows, gophers gamboled beneath them, squirrels romped on their limbs and birds, hidden in their foliage, sang as only the birds of the forest sing—they sang songs that awoke a response in the heart of Manton, child of mountain and of plain, and made him forget himself and his quest in his enjoyment of those things that he loved—songs that made him forget why he was there, until he was awakened from his day-dream by hoof-beats that rang louder and louder on the trail in advance of him.

His first thought was that Norman was coming back, but that was scarcely probable. He quickly got to cover, dismounted and held the muzzle of his horse in a manner that enjoined silence on the beast accustomed to understand and obey him by long experience with him of the perils and vicissitudes of the trail.

A moment, and Bud saw Charley Bighatchet ride into view.

"Norman's halfbreed scout and spy!" whispered the Nebraskan. "I wonder—Ah! I see."

The halfbreed stopped his mustang a few rods below the point where Manton was hidden, wheeled it quickly and started it galloping down the trail in the direction whence he had come.

"If he had come a little further, he would have struck my trail," thought Bud, "and he would not have overlooked it, for it is a trail of a man that he is out for. He is acting as Norman's rear guard. It is this halfbreed, not Norman, that I am likely to come upon suddenly if I am not careful, for he is between me and Norman. He has been waiting for Norman down there, further, for till now, neither he nor his trail has been in evidence. I didn't think of anything of the kind and my thoughtlessness might have done me up. Now I know about Charley Bighatchet's part in this game I'll play it more cautiously."

Several times during the next four or five hours, Bud heard the halfbreed patrolling the trail further down, but the scout never came back far enough to encounter the trailer. The latter slowed up and in[illegible] the distance between himself and Bighatchet and guided his horse round rocky places, where the clatter of its hoofs might have added danger to the situation. But Bud knew that the halfbreed was a menace to his success and he determined to outwit and get rid of him if he could find a way to do it without betraying his own presence to the chief of the claim-jumpers.

For miles past, Bud had seen no human habitation along the trail, and he knew that there was not one for miles in advance. Civilization had not been planted there, but he thought the country the more beautiful for that.

They had got nearly through the timber, and before them stretched the Bad Lands

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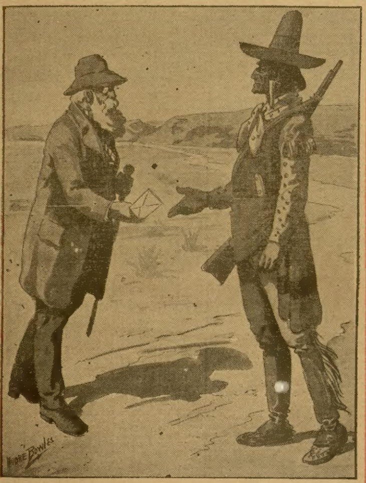
and through the Bad Lands the trail extended and beyond them, through a sparsely settled country, to the west bank of the Missouri.

How far on this long trail Norman would go, Manton could not even guess; but he knew that soon imperative nature would demand its due and the two humans and the two horses ahead would have to dine by the wayside. He had no wish to intrude upon them at their meal, so he killed a reasonable amount of time by leaving the trail a safe distance to one side and resting and feeding himself and horse. Soon after he regained the trail, he came upon a spot where Norman and Bighatchet had camped.

A little further on, the trail ran down to the bank of a narrow stream. For some distance along the creek's mucky bottom, Bud saw the tracks of two horses and urged his beast boldly into the water. He was scarcely ten feet from the bank when he heard hoof-beats behind him. Turning, he saw the halfbreed and knew that he had been discovered and outwitted.

Manton understood how he had been beaten, and he was chargrined beyond the telling. It had been a simple trick. Somehow, the halfbreed had come to suspect that Norman was being followed. He had ridden part way across the branch, then, in the water, upstream or downstream, then back to the bank that he had left. There, in the brush, he had waited for the trailer to pass, and now he menaced him from the rear.

Manton dared not fire at the halfbreed, because the report of his Winchester would apprise Norman of his presence. He was more afraid of the noise that Bighatchet's weapon would make, than of Bighatchet's bullets. Any sort of a gun-play now, would be fatal to Manton's plans and Manton would have none of it.



"He was lately in Deadwood," said the old man.

The ranger trailer knew what he had to do and he did it so promptly that the halfbreed was taken unawares.

Norman's scout had been dragged off his beast and was strangling in Manton's lasso. Norman, not wise to that vital fact, was going farther away. The Nebraskan was laughing as he dismounted near Charley Bighatchet.

In next week's issue of this paper the reader will be given the concluding chapters of this story. The management has in stock some of the best stories for boys ever written. These vill appear in these pages during the coming months. If you desire the Ledger regularly please note our advertisement of free premiums an pages thirteen and fifteen and subscribe at once.

Motor Car Etiquette.

Always assist your lady passengers to their seats before taking your own; when alighting suddenly at a stone wall or fence, however, the question of precedence is not considered.

When a tire is punctured beyond repair it is considered the correct thing on the part of a host to be explicit as to the number of miles the party must walk to reach home.

If anything disagreeable happens, lay it to the chauffeur; if he is a bigger man than you, it is permissible to do this behind his back.

After you have run down a pedestrian be sure and "honk-honk" very vigorously, especially if you have previously given no warning signal. This little act of attention may be soothing to the last moments of the unfortunate.

If a horse shows signs of fright, put on all possible power and go by him at full speed. In this way he will get rid of his fear—and possibly of his driver—more quickly.

If a village constable stands in the road watch in hand, head your machine at the watch. A correct aim destroys evidence.

No matter how well you can run your car, always keep a chauffeur in your pay; courtrooms and country jails are stuffy places.

If ladies are present when you get on your back under the machine to fix that "little trouble," it is the custom to gag yourself with cotton waste.

If you have been persuaded to purchase a copy of "Rules of the Road," throw it away; there are no rules for motorists.

And He Got.

A family, consisting of man, wife and four small children, were driving along in a wagon loaded with household goods when an old fellow living on the highway came to the door of his cabin and shaded his eyes with his hand and called out:

"Hello! Are that you, Sam Wheeler?"

"Yes, reckon 'tis," was the reply, as the mules were brought to a halt.

"Whar be you folks a'gettin' to?"

"We ar' a-gittin' 'm out of the kentry."

"What ar' you a'gettin' fur?"

"Cause the vigilance committee told us to git."

"Did, eh? I reckoned it would come to that. Whar's your two sons that they hain't a-gittin' with you?"

"They got pizened befo' they could git."

"Do you mean pizen by snakes?"

"No—lead. They was a-gittin' too many good mewls and got shot."

"Shoo! A feller ought to know when to quit. Wall, so long. Sorry to see you a-gittin', but reckon you haft to."

"So long with you, too," replied the other, and then gathering up the reins of the mules he shouted at them:

"Git right up thar, durn yer old hides, 'cause we gotter to be a-gittin' a git on us and git into Missouri as fast as we kin git!"

"Ever reckon to come back?" called the old man.

"Can't say. When a feller reckons to git thar's no tellin' whar' his a-gittin' is goin' to fetch up. Hee-up, you pair of rawbones hitched in front of a happy fam-ly!"

Some Representations.

A photographer was seeking to get a picture of a business block, and among others who wanted to dodge in and have his picture taken was an old man who was eating a biscuit he had begged from the house around the corner. He was warned away several times, but always returned and assumed a new pose.

A policeman was finally appealed to, and he walked up to the old fellow and demanded:

"Who or what do you think you represent in that attitude?"

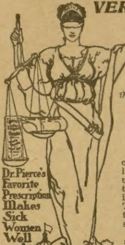
"Well, I guess I've struck a pretty good pose for Contentment," was the reply

"Oh, you do? Then it's for me to pose as Dissatisfaction."

And taking the old chap by the ear he walked him across the street and put in a couple of kicks that changed his pose to one representing Sorrow.

Quakeresses seldon take cold in the neck or head. This immunity is due to the fact that their bonnets protect the nape of the neck from drafts, the most sensitive part of the human frame.

A Berlin electrician has the smallest automobile in existence. It weighs only one-quarter of an ounce, is worn as a scarf-pin, and is kept running while being worn. A pocket battery supplies the current.



VERDICT FOR DR. PIERCE

AGAINST THE

Ladies' Home Journal.

Dr. Pierce's Traducers Come to Grief.

Their Base Slanders Refuted. Decision by the Supreme Court of the State of New York against the Ladies' Home Journal Publishers.

Sending Truth After a Lie.

John Graham, in a letter "from a self-made merchant to his son," says: "Sending the truth after a lie that has got a running start is like trying to round up a stampeded herd of steers while the scare is on them. Lies are great travelers and welcome visitors in a good many homes, *and no questions asked.* Truth travels slowly, has to prove its identity, and then lot of people hesitate to turn out an *agreeable* stranger to make room for it."

A case in point was the slanderous and libelous article published by the Ladies' Home Journal in May, 1904, wherein it was claimed that Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription contained alcohol and other harmful ingredients. Doctor Pierce promptly brought suit against the Curtis Publishing Company, publishers of the Ladies' Home Journal. The suit was for $200,000,00 damages.

Dr. Pierce alleged that Mr. Bok, the editor, maliciously published the article containing such false and defamatory matter with the intent of injuring his business; furthermore, that **no alcohol, or other injurious, or habit-forming, drugs are, or ever were, contained in his "Favorite Prescription"**; that said medicine is of purely vegetable composition, being made from native medicinal roots and contains no harmful ingredients whatever, and that Mr. Bok's malicious statements were *wholly and absolutely false.*

A retraction was printed by said *Journal* but not until *two months after the libelous article appeared.* They had to acknowledge that they had obtained analyses of "Favorite Prescription," made by **eminent chemists, all of whom certified that it did not contain alcohol or any of the alleged harmful drugs!** But the business of Dr. Pierce was greatly injured from the effect of the publication of the original libel with its great display headings, while hundreds of thousands who read the original wickedly defamatory article never saw the humble groveling retraction, set in small type and made as inconspicuous as possible. The matter was, however brought before a jury in the Supreme Court of New York State which promptly rendered a verdict in the Doctor's favor. Thus his traducers came to grief. Their base slanders were refuted and they were obliged to "eat humble pie."

During the trial of the libel suit Dr. Lee H. Smith, Vice-President of the World's Dispensary Medical Association, stated under oath that the ingredients of Doctor Pierce's Favorite Prescription were wholly extracted from the following native roots; Golden Seal, Blue Cohosh, Lady's Slipper, Black Cohosh and Unicorn by means of pure glycerine *of proper strength.* He was asked how he knew, as a physician and experienced medical man, that the "Favorite Prescription" was a *cure* for the diseases peculiar to women, such as female weakness, leucorrhea, prolapsus, retroversion and other displacements of the womanly organs, and he stated that he knew such was the fact because of his professional experience and the many thousands of women whose ills had been cured by this "Prescription."

This experience of Dr. Smith was corroborated by the standard Medical Authorities of the several schools of medicine endorsing the various ingredients in the strongest terms. Dr. Smith being asked to name some of these authorities as to the curative value of the above roots read from the standard works, such as the United States Dispensatory; The American Dispensatory; Organic Medicines, by Grover Coe, M. D.; Materia Medica and Therapeutics, by Professor Finley Ellingwood of the Bennett Medical College of Chicago; "New Remedies," by Prof. Edwin M. Hale, M. D., of Chicago; Text-Book of Therapeutics, by Dr. Hobart A. Hare, Professor in University of Penn'a; Laurence Johnson, M. D., Professor in University of New York; Professor John King, Author of "Woman and Her Diseases"; Wm. Paine, M. D., Author of "New School Practice of Medicine"; Professor John M. Scudder, M. D., Author of a treatise on "The Diseases of Women"; Horatio C. Wood, M. D., Author of "Therapeutics"; Roberts Bartholow, A. M., M. D., Prof. of Materia Medica, Jefferson Medical College of Phila.

All these recognized and standard authorities praise in the strongest possible terms, each and every ingredient which enters into the "Favorite Prescription" of Dr. Pierce for the cure of woman's peculiar weaknesses and ailments. In fact the **"Favorite Prescription" stands alone** as being **the only medicine for woman's special ailments** which has any such **professional endorsement** which fact is generally recognized as entitled to much more weight than any amount of lay, or non-professional testimonials.

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C.O.-1.

Honor Among Thieves.

(Continued from page three.)

yer step-mother had helped ye to bed and seen 'em. Eh, she would have a handle against ye fer the fatner I guess, and ye wasn't able to look after yerself."

"Oh, I am—I am grateful to you," exclaimed the girl, excitedly. "Why did you not tell me this at once?"

"Faith, ye didn't give me a chance."

"Of course there was nothing wrong. Nothing in which I was involved that I am ashamed of," but even as she said this she cast an apprehensive look in the direction of the windows and the roof line of the city beyond.

"Of course. Of course not. But then there's evil-minded parties in this house that would put a wrong light on yer trip and the blood marks on yer skirt and shoes."

"Hush! Don't speak so loud," replied the young mistress, laying a restraining hand on the maid's arm, and glancing at the door on the right leading to the main hall. "Of course, I can depend on you to keep this matter quiet?" looking at her companion uneasily.

"Oh, to be sure, when its to my interest."

"Exactly. I understand," catching the glitter of cupidity in the maid's hard eyes.

"I guess we understand each other, now," said the woman.

Certainly, Mary Gibney's silence was worth buying, though she knew she was putting herself in the power of an unscrupulous woman with the first bribe. She felt she was lowering herself in doing so, but it must be done.

"You always admired that gun-metal, gray gown of mine, Mary?" she said, with affected carelessness. "Well I'm tired of it, so I give it to you."

"Thank ye, ma'am. It's a pleasure to work for such generous folks. And if I only had a hat now to go with it——"

"Well, I haven't anything you would care for, or that I could spare," said the young lady, wearily. "But you can buy yourself one," and she went over to the little, white wood secretary in the corner, drew a netted purse out of the drawer and taking from it a few gold pieces, laid them in the maid's eager hand. "And now leave me, I can finish dressing by myself," as the woman showed a disposition to linger.

"Very good, ma'am. In case ye have need of me, ye have only to ring," replied the maid, with a mocking courtesy. "I'll not be far away."

"I wish you were ten thousand miles away," murmured the young lady, after the woman had gone. "Oh, what prompted me to go to his house last night, of all others?" flinging her arms about her with a desperate gesture.

And again she saw herself standing without his door, and heard the sound of a desperate struggle going on within, and angry voices, his and a woman's. Then some shadowy, gasping creature staggered by her and disappeared down the stairs to be followed by a cry that must ring in her ears all her life. After that she could not recall how she had got out of the building, and found a carriage and made her way home. And it was the odious maid who met her in the hall when she thought she had succeeded in slipping into the house without being seen!

Well, she had brought all the trouble on herself, and now she must buy this woman's silence. But that blood on her skirt and shoes. How had that come there? Oh, it was all like a terrible nightmare, and she felt a premonition that some awful fate hung over Renwood.

She dreaded going down stairs and meeting her step-mother, but it must be done. If she pretended to be ill, Mrs. Galbraith would hurry up to see what was the matter, and she much preferred meeting that lady across the table when she would have her lazy, good-natured father close by to lend her countenance.

It was not because she had dispensed with the services of her maid that morning that made her spend so much time over her toilet. She was not such a helpless young lady as all that. But she wanted to repair as far as possible the ravages of the night, erase the haggard lines, and look as much as possible her self.

It was nine o'clock when she summoned courage enough to go down stairs and face her father, and the woman who had come to fill her mother's place.

"Your mother did not think it worth while to wait for you, Florence," explained Mr. Galbraith, a pale, thin, meek gentleman, toying with his fork at the head of the table.

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"No, indeed. I don't believe in encouraging such laziness," said the lady in pearl silk, referred to, eyeing her step-daughter disapprovingly. Mrs. Galbraith, was large and commanding of figure, and a terror to the servants. "I never approved of young people lying abed half the day," she continued. "They didn't do it when I was young. But other times other ways. There will soon be no grandmothers in the world."

"That will not be a matter of regret in some cases," retorted the young woman, as she slipped into her seat at tne table, and began to play that she was eating the oatmeal before her.

Mr. Galbrath, cast an appealing look at his wife, who had opened her lips to make some retort. She did not say anything, but gave a sniff that was far more eloquent of her feelings than mere words.

Why, wondered the girl, as she bent over her bowl, did her father watch her with unusual solicitude that morning. Did he know anything about her adventure of the night before? She trembled at that thought, for she loved the old man. Certainly something unusual had occurred. There was a silent interchange of looks between the father and her step-mother.

"I don't think, Edward, that there is any need of our staying here any longer," said Mrs. Galbrath, as she rose. "It never agrees with me to remain at table after I have eaten. Your daughter will not need our society to finish her meal."

"No, of course not," replied the girl, heartily, glad enough that she was not to be the target of two people's glances when she was in such a guilty state of mind.

Mr. Galbrath patted her cheek with a sigh as he passed her chair.

"Don't take it too hard, Flossy," he whispered, and with this enigmatic speech vanished through the portieres, at the heels of his wife.

Take it too hard? What did he mean? Then her spoon dropped from her fingers. She had caught sight of a newspaper with a glaring heading, on the table near where her step-mother sat. It was an "Extra."

She felt sure that that paper had been left there for her special benefit, and suspected in advance what she should read in those glaring types.

She seized the sheet with feverish eagerness. The Murder in the Arcadian Flats—Mysterious Disappearance—Model—Quarrel. Young Artist Very Much Wanted, etc.

She read the lines through misty eyes. She did not faint. She had expected something of the kind, but not so soon. But what of Gilbert Renwood? Had he run away? Was he guilty? No, that was out of the question.

She rose from the table, ran through the hall, and mounted swiftly to her room. She heard her father's kind voice calling to her, but this time she paid no heed.

Twenty minutes later, heavily veiled, she slipped down the back stairs, stole through the garden and unbaring the gate, sped down the alley between the houses to the street.

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A JEALOUS WIFE.

BY F. WOODWARD NEELE.

Miss Elsa Renton sailed on the Savannah steamer from New York, and ,the next day was seated beside Godfrey Savage at breakfast They soon thawed the conversational ice, and became quite chummy at luncheon time, when they both confessed to a preference for ice cream.

They discovered a common acquaintance in Mrs. Willoughby, of Baltimore, and found, on comparing notes as to their travels, that they must both have been at Cape May during the very same week in June of the previous summer.

After that it is not surprising that they spent most of the afternoon together.

But it was not till dinner was nearly over that Elsa asked if Mr. Savage knew who was to occupy the vacant seat on his other side.

"That," said he, after an imperceptible hesitation, "is reserved"—he looked straight into her eyes—"for Mrs. Savage."

"Your wife?"

"My wife. At present she has not felt well enough to take her meals here."

"I did not know you were married."

"No? You have no objection, I suppose?" He smiled quizzically at her.

She tilted her chin, pouted her red lips, and shot a glance at him from her heavy-lidded blue eyes.

"Come up on deck," he said, and slipped his hand through her arm to steady her as they went up the steps from the saloon.

They spent the evening together as they had done the afternoon. Godfrey spread their deck chairs in a secluded nook, and there, wrapped up from any adverse winds, they talked of anything and everything, and parted at last very well pleased with themselves and each other.

In the seclusion of his cabin Godfrey told his wife that his table neighbor was an amusing girl. Asked to describe her, he could only say "she was good style—and very amusing."

"Is she traveling alone?" asked Mrs. Savage.

"Seems so. Nominally in charge of the captain, I expect. But she has taken a dislike to him on sight, and says she means to shake off his authority, and go her own way."

"A rather foolish girl, I should think," commented Edith Savage.

"She's very amusing," said Godfrey for the third time, and allowed the subject to drop.

Edith Savage was a dark, fragile woman; seasickness had made her even more frail in appearance than usual. Ten years before, when she had married Godfrey Savage, she was a very pretty girl. She was pretty still to those who could appreciate sweetness of expression; pretty still, when happiness brought a flush to her cheek and brightness to her eye.

Her husband made her happiness—and her unhappiness. And his output of the latter was largely in excess of the former.

No doubt they started life much as hundreds of other couples do every year—very much in love and full of good intentions. But Godfrey was one of those gay natures to whom novelty is everything, and after a year or two, secure in his wife's love and adoration, he took no trouble to retain them.

They had no children. Mrs. Savage retired daily more and more into herself, and Godfrey indulged more and more in flirtations. Probably quite harmless flirtations, but none the less wearing to his wife, who tried her best to take them as a joke, and couldn't.

For several more days she was unable to leave her berth. Godfrey looked in frequently to see her. He talked, at first, of Elsa Renton (still generally referring to her as amusing), but after a time he never spoke of her. If Edith asked, he said she was quite gay.

There was no doubt she was "quite gay," and so was he.

In three days they were the talk of the ship.

They promenaded together. She wore the smartest of white suits, with a jaunty hat, and the neatest of red shoes. The men followed them with interested glances, and the women stared frigidly at them, or looked past them with unseeing eyes.

"Why doesn't his wife come up!" said one lady.

"Why doesn't the captain interfere?" said another.

But no one saw Godfrey's wife or spoke to the captain.

In the long, lazy afternoons he sat at her feet, and read to her as she lay in her chair, and dallied with a bit of fancywork—which never progressed—or gazed idly out to sea. At night they sang together, duets for choice, but when an audience drifted in, they drifted out, and sat together under the still skies. The red light of his cigar shone as a beacon, and their retreat was avoided like the plague.

At last Edith Savage felt well enough to venture on deck. Godfrey supported her to where Miss Renton reposed in her chair, her dainty feet thrust forward as usual, to show the gay red shoes. He introduced the ladies to one another with a little feeling of constraint, for which he did not try to account.

Mrs. Savage smiled faintly. She felt the strong air confusing, but it brought a tinge of color to her cheek. She extended her hand.

Miss Renton took the hand languidly, and dropped it limply.

"So pleased to meet you," she murmured, in a slow, soft, patronizing voice, and allowed the conversation to lapse.

Godfrey spent a bad quarter of an hour trying to think of safe remarks to please both ladies, and then made some excuse and left them. Edith broke the silence that followed.

"You and my husband have become quite old friends by this time, I expect," she began.

"No—really!" said Miss Renton, vaguely.

"He tells me what good company you are."

"No! Does he, really?" repeated Elsa. It suited her to appear foolish sometimes.

"And Godfrey calls this girl amusing!" thought Edith, in astonishment.

That night she said to her husband:

"You call Miss Renton an amusing girl. She struck me as [illegible]tively stupid."

And Savage expressed the surprise [illegible] felt by saying:

"No! Really?"

The two ladies spent a great deal of their time together. Savage always planted their chairs side by side, and his wife scarcely liked to object to the arrangement.

She found herself always the unwanted third at these times. Elsa never attempted to be agreeable to members of her own sex—nor disagreeable; she only ignored them.

Edith saw how her husband jumped at Elsa's suggestions, echoed her sentiments, and applauded everything she said and did. She saw, too, that Elsa saw it, and the knowledge moved her one night to hint to her husband at the folly, at least, of his behavior.

"What a storm in a teacup you women make," he said, impatiently, and muttered something about "a jealous wife" that stung her into silence.

But Elsa's mean little mind was puffed up with vanity and self-approval. To have lured a handsome man's affection from his wife, to be the cause of his neglecting her, was to her a triumph.

"Poor Godfrey," she reflected, "what a fate; tied to a cold, prim wife! At any rate, I appreciate him."

As they sat together one night—they were nearing the Georgia coast; it was cold, and Edith had gone to the saloon—Savage was waxing more than usually indiscreet. Holding both her hands, he was leaning forward and whispering that she must be a real friend to him; he wanted, above all things, sympathy; there was a communion of souls; and much more of the hackneyed stuff such situations call for, when he became unpleasantly aware that they had entered a dense fog. Thick blinding fog, with every sight shut out, and every sound deadened.

"What's this? he exclaimed, straightening himself.

Elsa shivered.

"I hate a fog at sea," he said. "Let's go down to the saloon, at least there will be light there."

Edith Savage, in the saloon, had tried to fix her attention upon a book, but in vain. Thoughts hurried through her brain, thoughts of her husband and the girl on deck.

Was she, indeed, the jealous wife he had called her? Could he really care for Elsa? Was his love for his wife really dead? Was a man ever faithful to any woman? These thoughts whirled in ceaseless circles, till, overwrought, she felt compelled to go on deck again.

At the top of the saloon steps she met Savage and Elsa about to descend.

"Why, what a fog!" she exclaimed, in astonishment.

As she spoke, suddenly the fog horn jarred through the boat, and instantly, as it seemed, came an answering sound, startlingly near. Next moment a sickening crash shivered through the ship, and through the heart and brain of every soul aboard.

Every light went out. Only a horrible grinding was heard, accompanied by screams and voices, all muffled by the fog that hemmed them in.

"Heavens!" cried Savage, "something has struck us."

He caught his wife in his arms, and held her tight to his heart. In the fog they seemed to stand alone. All was confusion in the darkness.

At last, after what seemed an eternity, a sailor ran by with a lantern.

"What is it?" cried Savage, catching his arm.

"Collision," replied the man, in a hoarse voice, "and sinking fast. Make for the boats, they're trying to lower 'em."

"A collision," said Godfrey to his wife, as though she had not heard, "and we are sinking fast!"

He felt unnaturally calm. He even smiled into the face he could not see as it lay upon his shoulder. In this fearful moment he had no thought for anyone but her.

His past life, the past hour, was gone as a dream; effaced; wiped off.

For him sin, folly, intrigue were not. The world was not.

In such an hour of death, as in the Day of Judgment, the outward trappings fall from a man; his real self stands bare. The inmost fibers on which his being hangs alone remain.

He and this woman were facing death together. She was his wife, and he loved her.

"My darling," he murmured, kissing her cold face.

A moment of silence passed, and then Edith raised her head, and asked:

"Where is Elsa?"

"Great Heaven!" he cried, "where? I had forgotten her."

"He had forgotten her" sang in both women's ears; and a small, crushed voice said:

"I am here."

Edith took her hand.

A man ran up—another sailor, with a lantern. He flashed it on their pale faces.

"There's room for one more in the boat. Quick, now! Who's coming? Don't hesitate; in a minute, God help us, it will be too late!"

He put out his hand to Edith. Godfrey half released her, but she shook off the man's hand, and clung to her husband.

"No, no, I say! Go, Elsa"—and she pushed the girl from her side.

Elsa hesitated; the man seized her arm, and the fog swallowed them up.

"Why did you not go?" said Savage, in a broken voice. "What is Elsa to you or me that you should give your life for her?"

Edith burst suddenly into a storm of sobs.

"Could you part with me so easily?" she wept. "I could not leave you, dearest! I was jealous, yes, jealous, as you called me! I could not bear that she should die with you."

She trembled all over, shaken with long, shuddering sobs.

"Now you are mine, only mine. I'm glad, oh, how glad! We are going to die together! It's happiness to know no one can come between us any more."

He guessed dimly at some of the bitterness that had been in her heart.

"Forgive me," he said, pressing his lips on her hair; "forgive me. I am yours only—in death and in the world to come!"

They spoke no more.

The fog lifted suddenly, and a pale moon loked down upon the swirling water where a ship had sunk.

Nothing Formal.

"It was settled some time ago that he was to marry my daughter," said the father of a girl of the period, "but it yet remained for the young man to get my consent. It was merely a formality, however, as my wife had arranged matters to suit herself without consulting me or my wishes.

"Now, I remembered with what trepidation, I had approached my wife's father when I asked him for her hand, and I made up my mind that when that young man showed up to ask me for my daughter's hand I would have revenge, not only for what I had to pass through when I urged my suit, but also for being relegated to the background during the present proceedings.

"Well, he called at my office yesterday, and I told my office boy to admit him and leave us alone and see that we were not disturbed.

"'Just dropped in,' said he, easily, declining to take a seat, 'to tell you that I am going to marry your daughter on the 15th of next month. It will be an informal affair, so you may consider yourself invited without further notice. Good day!'

"Before I could catch my breath he was gone, and when I complained to my daughter about his treatment of me, all the comfort I got was that I could consider myself fortunate in getting an invitation, as it was to be a very exclusive affair."

No Good.

Mistress—Why don't you boil the eggs?

Cook—Sure, I've no clock in the kitchen to go by.

Mistress—Oh, yes, Bridget, you have.

Cook—Phwat good is ut? Ut's tin minnits fast!

FROM LUCILE'S DIARY.

When Genevieve Bayley invited me to spend two weeks at Applegate, the Bayley country home, I accepted with alacrity. Her father has an automobile, riding horses and an electric launch, and, of course, it's a pleasant place to visit.

I wrote in answer to her invitation that I would be out the next day, Tuesday. But when I heard that there was to be quite a house party for the week end, I decided that I needed another gown. So I had to wire Genevieve that I was detained and would be out Thursday. I knew Cousin Fannie could make a simple dimity for me in two days with mother's help, if she sewed evenings.

Just as I was getting ready to take the afternoon train Thursday, Malcolm Cox called up to say he wanted to take me out to his golf club for an impromptu dance that evening. Of course I couldn't miss that, so I decided to postpone going to Applegate until the next day.

Friday, when I reached the Medford station, where I expected Genevieve to meet me, there was no one there. It seemed an inconsiderate way to treat a guest. When I thought of the Bayles' automobile and all their horses I felt ready to cry at being so neglected. Medford is a dreary little town, and I felt too folorn for anything as I walked up the street to the livery stable. But my spirits rose when I saw Arthur Knight coming toward me in his gasoline runabout. I had forgotten that his people had a summer home near Applegate. It was a fortunate accident that I happened to have on the rajah silk suit that he admires so much.

"What are you doing here?" he asked, as he slowed down and jumped out beside me.

"I'm just going to the livery stable to get myself transported to Applegate, where I'm invited for a visit," I answered.

"Why, it's funny Genevieve didn't meet you," he said.

"Yes, it does seem so, but she may have been busy and she knows I can take care of myself." I tried to speak bravely.

"This is the time that I'll take care of you," he said, sympathetically. "Step into the runabout and I'll whisk you out to Applegate in no time."

We had a fine spin along the pretty country roads and I was almost glad that Genevieve hadn't met me. She was sitting on the porch as we came up the drive and she called out, "Why, Lucile, here you are at last! I went to the station last night and again this morning and then I gave you up."

"That was too bad, dear," I replied. "Didn't you get my telegram?"

"Why, no! Did you telegraph?" she asked in surprise.

Then I remembered that in my hurry to get ready for the dance I had forgotten to notify her of my change of plans. Of course that made me uncomfortable, especially as Arthur had been so sorry for me. I think it was very tactless of Genevieve to bring up the matter, but some girls are remarkably thoughtless about others' feelings.

I had quite a disagreeable time about my trunk. I found I had checked it to the wrong place. It's such a bother that there are two towns named so much alike—Medford and Meadville. I didn't have any of my own clothes and had to borrow from Genevieve. She is a nice girl in many ways and not bad looking, but her frocks are not a bit stylish. I knew I looked like a frump in her white mull that I wore Saturday evening when all the men came out from town. I chose it because it was trimmed with real lace. When we were dancing on the porch I caught my high-heeled slipper in the flounce and tore off yards of the lace. I think it must have been very carelessly sewed on. Of course a lot of the lace was ruined and I looked as if I were dressed in tatters all the rest of the evening. I rather expected Genevieve to offer me another gown to put on, but she didn't. She certainly is thoughtless at times.

We all spent Sunday on the water in the electric launch and I was the only girl that didn't get dreadfully burned. I had Genevieve's automobile veil and it protected me splendidly. When I saw how the green linen dress of hers that I was wearing faded in the sun, I was thankful my face hadn't been exposed to its fierce glare. Poor Genevieve was as red as a tomato. I really felt sorry for her, though I could scarcely keep from laughing every time I looked at her, for she was a comical sight with her nose blistered and her cheeks flaming.

The men were all going back to town Monday morning and at the last moment I decided to go with them, for I was tired of wearing Genevieve's clothes and anyway the country is rather dull in the midweek when there are only women and children about. Genevieve appeared quite displeased at my leaving so suddenly. She said she had invited a lot of the girls in the summer colony to tea to meet me. But I didn't feel that I could stay for that, for I knew Malcolm Cox would take me to the theater Tuesday evening if I was in town, and I hated to disappoint him.

I am afraid that Genevieve is vexed with me, for she hasn't answered my bread-and-butter letter. I wish people didn't take offense so easily. I am sure I always like to be on pleasant terms with every one, but some girls are so touchy it's almost impossible to be friendly with them.

I don't believe I'll go out to Applegate again this summer. I don't consider my visit there a great success.

* * *

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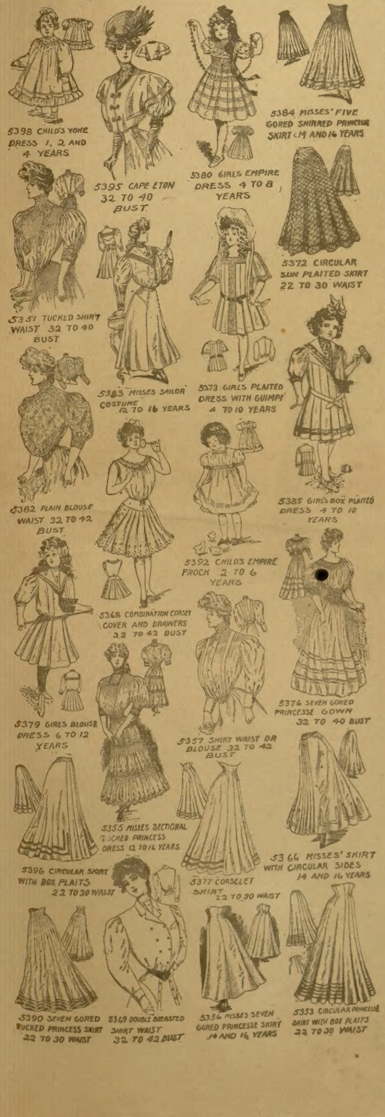
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Send us 50 cents for 12 months' subscription to COMMERCIAL POULTRY, the most practical and up-to-date Poultry Journal published, and we will send you in book form, postpaid, "Poultry Lessons for the Amateur," which contains the following twelve lessons: Sample copy free.

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Address COMMERCIAL POULTRY CO., Marseilles, Illinois

When answering advertisements you will favor the advertiser and the publishers by mentioning The Chicago Ledger

FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

AN ADVENTURE.

Dear little Miss Kitty,
As pretty as pretty,
Went out for a saunter one day;
She wore her ma's bonnet,
With ribbons upon it,
And a parasol giddy and gay.
She enjoyed herself greatly
And walked on sedately,
(A sweet little picture I trow),
When a sound that came to her
Struck terror right through her,
And no wonder. The sound was "bow! wow!"
Alas! 'Twas a pity
Miss Kitty, so pretty,
Climbed madly up into a tree.
And her bonnet it slipped
And her parasol ripped,
And a very sad object was she.
The dog waited long,
But she sang him a song—
It most mostly "meeow" and "me-eew"
Till he ran off at last
And she hurried home fast,
And her ma said: "How dreadful of you!"

In Ancient Irish Caves.

There has just been published by the Royal Irish academy a bulky report on the result of three years' exploration work among the caves of County Clare. No fewer than 70,000 specimens of bones were forwarded in parcels to the Dublin museum for identification. Each of these parcels was carefully labeled, bearing a number corresponding with a map of the cave giving the exact position and depth from the surface at which the specimens were obtained. The bulk of the material collected consisted of bones of various animals, including man, and these throw an interesting light on the old-time fauna of Ireland. Among the more important mammalian remains were bones of the brown bear, wolf, arctic fox, arctic lemming, Irish elk, red deer, reindeer, ox and wild boar.

One rather surprising discovery is that the bones of the wild cat, which occurred in some numbers, belonged not to the European, but to an African species, known as the Caffer cat (Felis ocreata). The larger of these caves furnished dwelling places for prehistoric men, for arrowheads and other implements of flint and bone, as well as bronze ornaments, have been recovered, many in a perfect state of preservation; and these were associated with human remains. From the form of the bones of the ankle joint it would appear that these skeletons represent the remains of people who habitually assumed a squatting posture, as is done by many savage races today. Charcoal and burnt stones afford further evidence as to the use of these caves.

Ornaments belonging to the early Christian era, including a gold bracelet, bronze pin and buckle, show that these same caves were used, at least temporarily, by much later generations of men. Artificially fractured bones of the Irish elk and reindeer show that these animals were hunted, at any rate, by the earliest human inhabitants of the island; but they probably were soon exterminated. Wolves, however, survived until comparatively recent times. The exact date of their final extermination is not known, but they existed in the great forests on the borders of Wicklow and Carlow as late as the year 1700, and it is supposed that they finally became extinct about 1766.

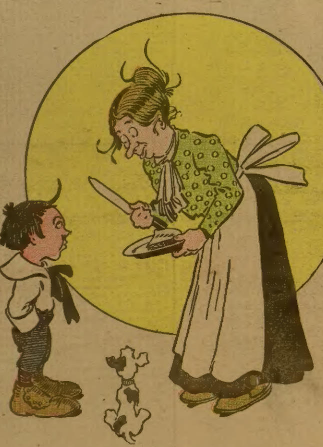
A Clever Cat.

A big amber-colored cat named Ted, which had always been most careful of his ways, fell into bad habits last summer. He appeared at the door on successive days, with a pigeon in his mouth. The horrified house-mother immediately tied three little bells to the cat's collar to prevent a repetition of his misdeeds. This seemed to work well for a time, as the tinkle warned the birds of danger.

Suddenly the bells disappeared; a box of bells, such as are sewed on children's worsted reins, was purchased, and as fast as a bell came off, another was tied in its place on the collar.

One day a big tiger cat, who was Ted's constant chum, was discovered calmly chewing the ribbon that attached the bells to Ted's collar. The mystery was solved; and after that we entertained our friends by tying a bell on his collar and putting him on the bed beside the tiger cat. The instant he discovered the bell the tiger began to chew it off.

What we would like to know is, did Ted ask him to remove the bell, or did the tiger cat dislike the sound of the tinkle, tinkle?



Sticking to the Point.—Mother—"Have you kept your baby brother nice and quiet while I've been gone, Tommy?"
Tommy—"Yes, mommer."
Mother—"Has he cried any at all?"
Tommy—"He hasn't made a sound, mommer, not the whole time."
Mother—"What did you give him to amuse himself with?"
Tommy—"The mucilage bottle, and he's been like a mouse since the first suck."

I DON'T CARE!

I don't care for the doll I broke
(Smashed her against the wall!)
She is all in a hundred bits;
I don't mind it at all!

I don't care if my lesson's hard,
I don't wish it was through.
I don't care for the doll I broke,
I don't care—but I do!

Sick Whale.

The whale was still complaining.

"Why did you let Jonah come up?" asked the shark. "Why didn't you hold him down?"

"I tried," grumbled the whale, "but he lit one of those Turkish cigarettes."

To the Barber's.

A thick-fleeced lamb came trotting by—
"Pray, whither now, my lamb?" quoth I.
"To have," he said, with ne'er a stop,
"My wool clipped at the baa-baa shop."

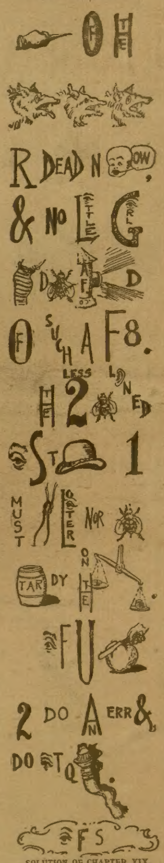
Has Ups and Downs.

Gunner—That elevator boy appears to be a very plain-spoken chap.

Guyer—Yes; he talks right up and down.

CAN YOU READ THIS STORY OF LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD?

CHAPTER XX



SOLUTION OF CHAPTER XIX.

Little Red Riding Hood was sitting in a corner, crying bitterly.

"My poor Granny, I will never see her any more!"

"That you will not," said one of the woodmen, tenderly. "Poor innocent! But you may be thankful that you have escaped yourself."

SOLUTION OF CHAPTER XX.

All of the wolves are dead now, and no little girl need be afraid of such a fate.

The lesson to be learned is that one must not loiter nor be tardy on the way.

If you have to do an errand, do it quick.

FINIS.